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Response to Intervention Viewed Through the Lens of Adoption of Innovation

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Response to Intervention Viewed Through the Lens of Adoption of Innovation

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my daughter Alexandra. Alexandra's ability to demonstrate perseverance, tenacity, and grace through trials and tribulations has been an inspiration to me. She has been and continues to be a loving daughter that does not know what it means to "give up" despite facing overwhelming challenges and obstacles. Alexandra's ability to remain steadfast and positive through the most trying of circumstances served us well as I pursued my degree.

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Response to Intervention Viewed

Through the Lens of Adoption of Innovation

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The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004 states that a local education agency (LEA) may use a process that determines whether a child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as part of the evaluation procedures to identify the child as having a specific learning disability and as eligible to receive special education services. One such process that LEAs are using is response to intervention (RTI). Typically, RTI has been conceptualized and implemented as a multitiered prevention and intervention instructional support system for struggling learners.

The implementation of RTI requires practitioners' knowledge and skill in the planning, development, and execution of its innovative, scientifically based research methods. Rogers's (2003) diffusion of innovation model served as the framework for this study. Rogers's 5 main steps in the innovation-decision process were examined: (a) knowledge, (b) persuasion, (c) decision, (d) implementation, and (e) confirmation.

Through this lens, how the innovation-decision process influences educators and schools to adopt or not adopt multitiered instruction defined as RTI was examined. The study explored whether practitioners did adopt RTI; whether all 5 stages were implemented by the educators; and, if so, whether they were sequenced. The study also examined whether adoption occurred and all aspects of RTI were being adhered to. Despite an abundance of research and writings on the pedagogical implications related to RTI, largely due to recent federal policy, there is a paucity of research on RTI regarding the organizational complexity related to implementing RTI. This lack of inquiry of organizational processes and effects of RTI affects both general and special educators, and consequently students of all ages.

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Chapter 1: Response to Intervention as an Innovation

In 2004, the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act was reauthorized as the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The 2004 reauthorization of IDEIA allows a local education agency (LEA) to use a process that determines if a child responds to a scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation process for determining the presence of a learning disability (LD; IDEIA, 2004, §300.307-309). However, it does not prescribe how this process is to be implemented or which research-based intervention model to use (Bradley, Danielson, & Doolittle, 2007). In addition to this malleability, neither a specific type of response to intervention (RTI) model nor specific research-based interventions have been endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. This has created confusion amid practitioners, both as to the definition of what actually constitutes RTI, and how to conceptualize and implement the framework and process. If these questions and issues remain unaddressed, with LD being the largest disability category, success for students, efficacy of resources, procedures and content of professional training, and confusion in policy and procedures may have the effect or potential to reduce or eliminate progress for students, parents, and the disciplines serving these students. This circumstance of confusion and potential harm to students with disabilities is evidenced by results from a national study (Yates et al., 2010). For example, results from Yates et al.'s (2010) study indicated some general and special

educators believe it is appropriate to apply RTI not just to specific LD but to all disabilities, including intellectual and cognitive disabilities as well as sensory impairments

Variances in knowledge and understanding of RTI, coupled with accepted flexibility, appear to result in individual states and schools developing their own interpretation of the RTI procedures allowed in federal law (Berkeley, Bender, Peaster, & Saunders, 2009). Different RTI models are being used, contributing to misinterpretations, which in turn have led different states, schools, and districts to implement their own version or style of RTI. Historically, standardization of definition and implementation has been thought critically important when determining a disability and eligibility to receive special education services.

Historical Perspective

Congress included LD as a disability category in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975) in response to the unique needs of a group of children demonstrating "unexpected" and "specific" learning failures (D. Fuchs, Mock, Morgan, & Young, 2003, p. 157). From its inception, the determination of LD eligibility as a qualifier for special education services has been controversial among researchers, practitioners, parents, and advocacy groups. Controversy stems from a lack of conceptual and diagnostic clarity for LD classification. The criteria used to identify a child with LD are not standardized, and eligibility varies

from state to state (Bradley et al., 2007). As a result of this lack of clarity, LD is the largest category of students with disabilities.

Work by Rutter and Yule (1975) conceptualized a discrepancy of intelligent quotient (IQ) and academic performance as evidence of having a disability. This conceptualization emerged as a primary means of determining LD as a disability. Rutter and Yule conducted studies measuring the IQ and reading performances of 9- through 14-year-olds on the Isle of Wight, off the southern coast of England. From the children's IQ scores, they predicted their reading scores. They then produced a distribution of IQ scores that predicted reading performance. This dispersal resulted in what Rutter and Yule reported as a "hump" indicating "extreme degrees" of reading underachievement for some students (p. 185). There was a clear cluster of children whose IQ scores predicted a higher reading score than the scores the children actually mastered. This cluster of children showed differences from children whose performance indicated low reading performance as well as a low IQ. Rutter and Yule labeled the first group "underachievers" and the latter group "low achievers" (p. 194). According to Rutter and Yule, these differences validated the *unspecified* or unexplained learning failures of some students. Conceptually, if a child possessed the intelligence to learn at a certain level, yet the performance did not reflect this level of performance, the discrepancy indicated a disability (i.e., LD).

Federal and state regulations clearly demonstrated the impact of Rutter and Yule's (1975) research findings. The regulations were written so that educators were permitted to classify as LD students who did not attain corresponding rates of achievement and ability, in other words a "severe discrepancy" between performances on IQ tests and achievement tests (D. Fuchs et al., 2003, p. 158). Counter to its objective, the adoption of this severe discrepancy model provoked implementation issues, such as what achievement assessments to use and how much of a discrepancy defines *severe*. These inconsistencies of implementation among practitioners contributed to the confusion of how best to identify LD. One problem with the discrepancy model is it may take years for a discrepancy between potential and performance to become evident. Thus, although an educator may suspect an LD in the early grades, the severity of the discrepancy may not be evident until later in the child's academic career. Thus, the discrepancy model provides limited data for early interventions for an LD or what some have labeled as a requirement for failure prior to services for a child with an LD.

Legislation

The practice by educators of identifying students with LD using the discrepancy model resulted in problematic and inconsistent detection of students with LD. As Gresham (2007) noted, the traditional protocol for schools addressing student academic difficulties has been a three-stage process of "refer-

test-place" (p. 10). Students identified by school practitioners as requiring more intense help beyond the general education classroom were referred for assessment and recommendations for interventions or special education placement. Because recommended interventions were often not evidence based, and typically had no assessment of their effectiveness, the discrepancy model was open to questions of effectiveness.

During the reauthorization process of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act in 1997, the identification process of specific LD was questioned by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD; as cited in Bradley et al., 2007). The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs and the NJCLD sought to rectify late and inaccurate identification of specific LD. Their work became known as the LD initiative (Bradley et al., 2007). The initiative's intent was to address flaws in the discrepancy model. Specifically, many students experienced failure in school for years before they were determined eligible for special education services. Because of this failure, the discrepancy model became known as a *wait-to-fail* model (Bradley et al., 2007; D. Fuchs et al., 2003).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB, 2002) was a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This legislation embodied four key principles: (a) stronger accountability for results; (b) greater flexibility for states, school districts, and schools in the use of federal funds; (c) more choices for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds; and (d) an

emphasis on teaching methods that have been demonstrated to work (NCLB, 2002). The intended goal was sweeping educational reform aimed at improving student performance and shifting the culture of America's schools to have consistent expectations of higher standards. Almost every program authorized under the earlier Elementary and Secondary Education Act was affected by this legislation, including IDEIA (2004).

One of the more profound implications of NCLB (2002) related to accountability. The law required states to assess all students, even those with disabilities. Prior to NCLB, students identified with disabilities were not required to be included in the accountability calculation of performance for a campus or school district. Under NCLB, students with disabilities were a part of the systemic, school-wide accountability process. This requirement particularly intensified the need for timely and accurate identification of students with specific LD, the largest disability category.

The reauthorization of IDEIA (2004) allowed LEAs to use a student's response to scientifically based interventions as part of the evaluation process; thus, the RTI model began to emerge for determination of LD eligibility. IDEIA, Public Law 108-446, Part B, Sec 614(b)(6)(b), is a "regulatory provision reflect(ing) a fundamental paradigm shift that closes the gap between instruction and assessment" (Jimerson, Burns, & VanDerHeyden, 2007, p. 3). The *shift* in how students may be assessed to determine the existence of an LD can be seen as

a nexus to the earlier policy of NCLB. NCLB (2002) emphasized the use of scientifically based research methods for teaching. IDEIA (2004) required scientifically based research interventions as part of the RTI LD identification process.

However, identifying students as eligible for special education services based on a lack of progress is not a new concept. L. S. Fuchs and Fuchs (1998) proposed a four-phase process of treatment-oriented assessment for LD eligibility, whereby problems were initially identified and corrected in the general education setting and students receiving special education services truly required the services and could benefit from those services. The President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2001) stimulated further debate on LD identification when it endorsed incorporating RTI in the identification and assessment process. Again, no specific model or definition of RTI was proposed in the commission's report.

Elements of RTI

The search for an alternative to the existing practice of IQ and achievement discrepancy stemmed from a need to ensure appropriate, timely identification of the right students (Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman, 2003). Bradley et al. (2007) pointed out that the discrepancy model assisted neither practitioners nor parents in making instructional programming decisions. For many educators, the attraction of RTI has centered upon being able to develop

interventions for struggling learners as soon as the educator believes a problem exists. The identification of an LD under the umbrella of RTI must be based upon the student's response to implemented interventions. Thus, struggling students do not have to "fail" prior to getting needed assistance and support. IDEIA (2004) also creates an option of using up to 15% of federal Part B funds for "early intervention" (§ 1413[1][1], § 1418d[2]). Early intervention has been conceptualized as integral to assuring a more accurate diagnosis of LD. Struggling learners receive interventions in the initial stages of their academic difficulties, which may address or correct problems of achievement, thus eliminating the need for LD disability designation. The basic components of a RTI process are (a) assuming effective, quality, general education instruction; (b) monitoring student progress; (c) selecting and implementing specific instruction and interventions for students not progressing; (d) progress monitoring; and, as a final step, (e) qualifying students for special education if they have not responded to selected interventions (D. Fuchs et al., 2003).

Significance of RTI Issues

With the reauthorization of IDEIA (2004), a wealth of opinions and research involving RTI models has occurred. Despite the increased research, no consensus has been reached regarding treatment validity, research-based interventions, and the process of identifying a disability (Burns, Jacob, & Wagner, 2008; Gresham, 2007; Reynolds & Shaywitz, 2009). In addition, the ambiguity of

the definition of RTI (Kavale, 2005); lack of specificity and criteria used in the implementation process (Witsken, Stoeckel, & D'Amato, 2008); assessment considerations (Gresham, 2007); lack of quality, in-depth professional development (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009); and an overall need for more research on the development and implementation of RTI frameworks in large-scale situations are concerns and issues associated with RTI needing to be addressed by researchers (D. Fuchs & Deshler, 2006; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2006; Vaughn & Fuchs, 2006).

In order for successful implementation of RTI to occur, practitioners at the kindergarten through Grade 12 (K-12) level need to be knowledgeable about this multifaceted process. General education and special education instructors, as well as district and campus administration, must be accurately informed about conceptual, theoretical, and procedural constructs when systemically implementing RTI. It is vital that the diffusion of this knowledge and skill set among educators is accurate, including understanding of terminology and standardization of practices within schools and school districts. Ensuring the correct students are receiving targeted, quality interventions and then, if needed, are appropriately identified to receive special education services is a critical component of the RTI framework. This change in law, policy, and practice can be conceptualized as an innovation with demands for change in the educational system.

Purpose and Scope

Despite an abundance of written comment on the philosophical and practitioner implications of RTI, there is a paucity of empirical research on RTI and even less information available related to the complexity of RTI and its organizational effects. These organizational effects should be examined from the standpoint of policy, professional development, organizational structure, fiscal implications, and personnel requirements. Factual information related to these areas is limited and not commonly disseminated; yet, this information affects both general and special educators, interventions for struggling students of all ages, and the processes needed to determine eligibility for special education services. This study sought to use Rogers's (2003) conceptions of adoption of innovation and other organizational theory (Wieck, 1982) to explore whether these theoretical structures of organizations can help explain and forecast the way practitioners in educational organizations have implemented and will implement RTI.

"It is the researcher's creativity, sensitivity, flexibility and skill in using the verification strategies that determines the reliability and validity of the evolving study" (Morse, Barrett, Maya, Olson, & Spiers, 2002, p. 17). Morse et al. (2002) identified four verification strategies to be used in qualitative research to ensure reliability and validity:

1. Methodological coherence ensures alignment between the research question and the components of the method (p.18).
2. The sample must be appropriate, meaning the sample needs to consist of participants who best represent or have knowledge of the research topic.
3. Collecting and analyzing data concurrently forms a mutual interaction between what is known and what one needs to know, the essence of attaining reliability and validity.
4. Thinking theoretically involves the concept that ideas emerge from data and are reconfirmed in new data.

Research Questions

Through the use of qualitative research and implementing the recommended verification strategies, the following research questions were addressed:

1. When educational practitioners perceptions of RTI are sorted into Rogers's five adoption characteristics, what unique aspects, differences, and commonalities exist in the perceptions held?
2. Do Rogers's characteristics of innovations and sequence of adoption forecast RTI implementation in educational organizations?

Chapter 2: Literature Synthesis

Criteria and Procedures

This synthesis has sought to bring understanding to the current state of educational organization implementation of RTI. Specifically, this synthesis provided information from professional literature, primarily peer-reviewed journals, that

- defines RTI,
- addresses or develops a conceptual framework of RTI,
- addresses change and adoption of innovation in an organization,
- addresses the characteristics of innovation,
- addresses processes of adoption of innovation and systemic change,
- addresses educational change and reform, and
- links the processes of change and adoption of innovation to RTI.

The following electronic databases were included in the search and synthesis: Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, EBSCO, Web of Science, PsychINFO, Educational Abstracts and Dissertations Abstracts International, Google Scholar, and Business Source Complete. Keywords used in the searches included *response to intervention, education* and *innovation, education* and *diffusion, innovation* and *change, response to intervention* and *change,* and *innovation* and *organizational structure.* The terms of *No Child Left Behind* and *IDEIA* were also used to provide legislative and statute information.

The abstracts of the articles and books identified by the databases were reviewed to determine whether they addressed the topics of RTI—its definition, models of implementation, and proposed theoretical constructs. Nineteen articles met these criteria, with an additional article by Rutter and Yule (1975) chosen to address the historical context of the concept of IQ discrepancy and academic achievement. Rogers (2003) and Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) provided the largest volume of literature on diffusion and adoption of innovations. Literature rejected from the initial search on change and innovation was the intervention literature addressing medical research and treatment modalities pertaining to health issues.

The innovation and change literature addressed adoption of innovations, implementing change, and systems change in various types of organizations. Article and book abstracts provided the necessary information on change and innovation within educational settings. Ancestry searches from reference lists of chosen articles were also performed. This search identified an additional study by Berkeley et al. (2009) providing an overview of the progresses individual states were having in their implementation of RTI. Wieck (1982) provided an earlier view of loosely coupled organizations that appears descriptive of educational organizations in the processes of change.

Selection of Studies

The RTI literature search was in the timeframe of the 1970s with Rutter and Yule's (1975) work and the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975. Studies examining innovation and change were not limited by time constraints. These studies were found in the agricultural, sociology, business, and education literature. School reform literature by Fullan (1985) and Hall and Hord (2006) provided information on educational change processes, including understanding and facilitating the change process within school systems. In addition, research on systems theory and the analysis of behavior between individuals and their organizations by Ackoff and Emery (2008) was included to help explain communication in education as a social system. Articles were excluded if (a) they were case studies of individuals or groups in a treatment or intervention RTI model, (b) the RTI process was implemented to address behavioral issues or any other impairments that were not an LD, or (c) they were solely addressing the effectiveness of a particular intervention or treatment.

Articles presenting a definition of RTI together with the theoretical constructs of the RTI framework included D. Fuchs and Fuchs (2006); D. Fuchs et al. (2003); Kavale, Kaufman, Bachmeier, and LeFever (2008); Kavale (2005); and Gresham (2007). D. Fuchs et al. (2003) provided a historical perspective that helped explain the attraction of the RTI approach in contrast to the traditional IQ

discrepancy approach in identifying students as LD. The attraction for many, noted by the authors, was due to the marked increase of students being identified as having a disability between 1977 and 1994. During this time period, students being identified as disabled rose from approximately 3.7 million to 5.3 million, even though public school enrollment remained fairly static. Students identified as LD showed the greatest increase, with almost half of them qualified with the LD label.

D. Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) outlined conceptual issues associated with RTI through descriptions of how the problem-solving model and standard-protocol approach are used in helping ascertain if a student is LD. Gresham (2007) and L. S. Fuchs (1995) also discussed the conceptual issues associated with RTI, noting the comparison to the medical model; a student's response to an academic intervention is measured, the treatment is intensified, and if adequate response is not demonstrated, a student may be LD. Kavale (2005) argued RTI is not redefining what an LD is and noted that at best it is only reoperationalizing the term LD, exemplifying the ambiguity of the definition of RTI. This ambiguity between LD and the RTI process "moves the construct [of specific LD] in a direction that makes it less precise and open to varying interpretations" (Kavale et al., 2008, p. 140). As Kavale stated, "The real problem with the RTI model lies not in the procedures themselves but rather in the leap of faith necessary for unresponsiveness to become SLD [specific LD]" (p. 559).

Findings From the Literature

RTI models. There are two distinct RTI models advocated by different groups of education professionals. One model, described as a problem-solving model, is often favored by school practitioners such as school psychologists, campus administrators, and teachers (D. Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). The second model, known as the standard-protocol model, is preferred by researchers (D. Fuchs et al., 2003). These two approaches differ in the implementation strategies for struggling learners.

The problem-solving model is an inductive approach whereby students' academic as well as behavioral problems are evaluated through a staged process: (a) identifying and analyzing the problem, including collection of baseline data; (b) generating possible strategies or interventions; (c) implementing an intervention plan; (d) monitoring student progress to determine success; and (e) reviewing and revising plans as needed (NJCLD, 2006). The problem-solving model utilizes a team-based structure that is responsible for fulfilling each stage of the process. It is suggested that team membership include at least three people: (a) someone experienced in working with students who receive special education services, such as a diagnostician or educational psychologist; (b) the student's general education teacher; and (c) a parent. When the team comes together, a problem analysis is conducted. Strategies or interventions are identified to assist the classroom teacher in implementing and monitoring the effect of the

interventions. Coordination of responsibilities between the teacher and the team in the implementation phase is agreed upon, thereby helping to ensure the goal directed plan is followed (D. Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; D. Fuchs et al., 2003). Once these interventions are implemented, there is the need for accurate, ongoing data collection of individual student response to the treatment in order to ascertain if the student has responded or not responded to the intervention. If the student continues to receive treatment and is a nonresponder, then special education services are considered.

The standard-protocol model regulates instructional practices and assessments for all students. This model is favored by early interventionists and depends upon the utilization of scientifically based research methodologies and materials applied to students with similar problems, goals, and objectives (D. Fuchs et al., 2003). Unlike the problem-solving approach, in which interventions vary and depend on the individual student, the standard-protocol model does not vary in approaches or methods being implemented. The time period for students to respond to an intervention is commonly a finite duration ranging from 10–15 weeks in either a group or individual settings. If students respond to the intervention, they are considered "remediated" and "disability-free." If students do not respond to the intervention, they are provided a more intensive remediation.

Framework of tiered instruction. There are various terminologies and definitions connected with RTI, but typically the framework is conceptualized as at least three tiers of intervention and data gathering (Bradley et al., 2007). At each level or tier, practitioners ascertain the complexity of the problem, explore probable causes, create a targeted intervention, implement the planned intervention, monitor student progress, make necessary changes based on student responsiveness, and assess the efficacy of the intervention to help plan future activities (D. Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). RTI assumes that high-quality instructional and behavioral supports are provided to all students within the general education setting. Tier 1 assumes the primary intervention is effective, general education curricula and instruction implemented by general education classroom teachers. Universal screenings or curriculum-based assessments of literacy skills, academics, and behaviors are considered to be part of the quality instruction of Tier I (NJCLD, 2005).

Tier 2 identifies students whose performance and rate of progress in Tier 1 lag behind their peers. They are targeted for instruction directed at remediating or enhancing skills within the general education setting (NJCLD, 2005). Tier 2 requires careful selection and monitoring of the effect of the selected scientifically based intervention. If a student in Tier 2 does not demonstrate significant progress and continues to require additional interventions or support, the student is considered for Tier 3 services.

Tier 3 includes individualized interventions targeted at the specific and unique learning needs of each individual student (D. Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). After these multilayered interventions have been implemented and the student continues not to respond, a comprehensive evaluation may be warranted. To determine the presence of an LD and eligibility for special education services, the evaluation requires multiple assessment data reviewed by a multidisciplinary team (NJCLD, 2005).

Continuously assessing, implementing interventions, and data gathering as to the effect of interventions are components with the multitiered process of RTI. The process is supported in IDEIA 2004, according to Hollenbeck (2007), as a "multitiered process of providing support to struggling learners, either in the general education setting or through supplemental instruction, while continuously assessing outcomes" (p. 137). Student learning rates, levels of achievement, and measured performance data guide decision making about the need for increasing or decreasing the intensity of interventions (National Association of State Directors of Special Education & Council of Administrators of Special Education, 2006). RTI is "typically considered a multi-tiered, prevention-intervention system; successive levels of instructional support are provided when a student's response to the academic program is sufficiently poor, particularly as compared to the responses of his or her peers" (Stecker, Fuchs, & Fuchs, 2008, p. 10). The research-based interventions students receive are intended to match their learning

needs and to increase learning outcomes (National Association of State Directors of Special Education & Council of Administrators of Special Education, 2006). The multitiered approach is "an approach to help struggling learners. Student progress is closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine the need for further research- based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both" (RTI Action Network, 2009, para. 1). D. Fuchs et al. (2003) have linked the multiple tiers:

1. Students are provided with generally effective instruction by their classroom teacher;
2. Their progress is monitored;
3. Those who do not respond get something else, or something more, from their teacher or someone else;
4. Again their progress is monitored; and
5. Those who still do not respond either qualify for special education or for special education evaluation. (p. 159)

Practitioners working within a system attempting to implement RTI are confronted with complex diagnostic, assessment, instructional programming, organizational, and professional issues and decisions. Progress monitoring, assessment, and prevention-intervention are all complex, yet key components to the RTI framework. Differing processes and understandings of RTI, such as fidelity of implementation, timely progress monitoring, and scientifically based practices, can complicate the reliability and validity of determining the presence of an LD.

Prevention of special education placement. Not only is improved student achievement a specific goal of RTI, but there is also the assumption that appropriate and early interventions would reduce special education categorization and placement. RTI means

> a comprehensive early detection and prevention strategy that identifies struggling students and assists them before they fall behind. RTI are intended to be systems combining universal screening and high quality instruction for all students with specific interventions targeting struggling students. (Harr-Robins, Shambaugh, & Parrish, 2009, p. 4)

RTI relies on "preventative interventions that are individually tailored to meet the students' learning needs" (D. Fuchs & Fuchs, 2007, p. 16). RTI holds "promise of a new process of instruction, assessment and intervention that allows schools to identify struggling students early, provide appropriate instructional interventions, and increase the likelihood that students can be successful and maintain their class placement" (Mellard & Johnson, 2008, p. 1).

Assessment of student progress with RTI. *Assessment and instruction, systematically monitoring, response-to-instruction,* and *allocation of resources* are all terms used in discussion of RTI and assessment (Bradley et al., 2007; Burns & Gibbons, 2008; Kame'eni, 2007; Vaughn & Fuchs, 2003). Assessment and instruction pertain to RTI as "essentially and instrumentally an assessment and instructional process that is dynamic, recursive, and based on rigorous scientific research" (Kame'eni, 2007, p. 7). Systematically monitoring RTI is "an assessment and intervention process for systematically monitoring student

progress and making decisions about the need for instructional modifications or increasingly intensified services using progress monitoring data" (National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, as cited in Bradley et al., 2007, p. 12).

The term *response-to-instruction* was described by Vaughn and Fuchs (2003) as a method of RTI comprised of four components:

> (1) ongoing progress-monitoring -monitoring assessment procedures, (2) adequate information about effective instructional practices and the expected trajectory outcomes from those instructions, (3) a committed general education system implementing a highly effective core academic and behavioral intervention program with the knowledge and resources to implement the supplemental programs, and (4) a means for screening and tracking student progress. (p. 141)

Allocation of resources is a term used by Burns and Gibbons (2008) as "the systematic use of assessment data to most efficiently allocate resources in order to improve learning for all students" (p. 1). Burns and Gibbons continued,

> RTI is a direct attempt to return to the basis of special education by monitoring student response to instructional approaches, modifying those approaches based on the data in order to address the unique needs of each child, and to perhaps reach a more useful diagnosis of learning disability. (p. 3)

Standard treatment protocol and *high-quality instruction* are two terms commonly used to describe RTI methods focused on instruction. Standard treatment protocol was defined by D. Fuchs and Fuchs (2007) as

> an alternative to the problem-solving approach. Whereas the problem solving approach differs from child to child, a standard protocol does not. Implementation usually involves a trial of fixed duration (e.g., 10 to 15 weeks) delivered in small or individual groups. (p. 95)

The term *high-quality instruction,* according to the National Association of State Directors of Special Education and the Council of Administrators of Special Education (2006), refers to the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions.

Adoption-of-Innovation Framework for Observing RTI

Rogers (2003) studied the diffusion of innovations, the rate of adoption of innovations, adoption stages, and the innovation-decision processes involved in decisions to adopt an innovation. His work spans multiple disciplines, including sociology, agriculture, communication, health sciences, education, and is the second-most cited work in the social sciences (Singhal, 2005). This study was designed to determine whether Rogers's paradigm of adoption of innovation can be used as a diagnostic tool to assist school districts in ascertaining what phase of the adoption process their district is in and how the individual members within the system are responding to the innovation's adoption.

RTI as a new method for identifying students having LD can be conceptualized as an innovation. As Rogers (2003) described, "An innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (p. 12). The law (IDEIA, 2004) allows a new approach defining LD. RTI becomes an intriguing alternative to past practices of discrepancy analysis for

identifying LD. RTI "is a chance to infuse strategies and interventions that traditionally are used only in special education—such as progress monitoring—into the day-to-day practice of general education" (Bradley et al., 2007, p. 9). In order to successfully implement the innovation RTI, practitioners at the K-12 level must be knowledgeable about this new multifaceted process. It is vital that RTI knowledge among educators is accurate, including an understanding of terminology and standardization of procedures within schools and school districts.

The decision regarding implementation issues for organizations such as LEAs is what Rogers (2003) referred to as the innovation-decision process. During this process, an individual or a system goes from a stage of knowledge of the innovation towards a stage with perception of or attitude toward the innovation. Usually this occurs in a time-ordered sequence of (a) knowledge, (b) persuasion, (c) decision, (d) implementation, and (e) confirmation (Rogers, 2003). After an attitude or opinion toward the innovation is formed, a decision can be made to either adopt or reject the innovation. This decision requires certain processes. Specifically, *communication* is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding (Rogers, 2003). *Diffusion* is the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. It is a special type of communication in that the messages are concerned with new ideas.

As Rogers (2003) explained, through the innovation-decision process an individual or a system over time determines whether the new idea is going to be implemented and adopted as ongoing practice. If there is a decision to adopt the new innovation, fidelity of implementation is necessary to ensure quality of interventions appropriate to identified needs. The adoption process may be influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of others. Rogers labeled these influences as change agents that direct and influence the adoption process. Rogers identified five determining characteristics of an innovation: (a) relative advantage, (b) compatibility, (c) complexity, (d) trialability, and (e) observability.

Relative advantage "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes" (Rogers, 2003, p. 15). Measurement can be in both economic terms and social prestige or status. The most pertinent factor of this characteristic is how advantageous the individual thinks an innovation will be; the more advantageous, the more rapid its rate of adoption. Expectation plays a pertinent role. The more one believes an innovation will be effective, the faster its rate of adoption.

Compatibility "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters" (Rogers, 2003, p. 15). An innovation or idea that is incongruent with the values, norms, and practices of a social system is likely to have a slower

adoption rate and frequently requires the prior acceptance of a new value system, thereby further decreasing the rate of its adoption.

Complexity "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being difficult to understand and use" (Rogers, 2003, p. 16). Innovations that are easier to comprehend and utilize have a faster adoption rate than those innovations that are more complicated and require the attainment of new skills and learning.

Trialability "is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis" (Rogers, 2003, p. 16). Novel ideas that can be implemented in pieces or on a small scale enjoy more rapid adoption than new ideas that require full implementation.

Observability "is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others" (Rogers, 2003, p. 16). The more transparent the results of the innovation are to individuals, the greater the likelihood of adoption of the innovation. Transparency promotes discussion, thereby creating a desire for more information about the innovation. If an innovation is seen as working, interest in implementation and adoption are more likely.

Innovations are typically considered to be constructs, actions, and processes within social systems. Ackoff and Emery (2008) characterized a social system as "a system whose elements are purposeful individuals who are able to pursue not only production goals but also purposes and even ideals that pertain to themselves" (pp. 215-216). Social systems can be assessed only by reference to

the state of the whole system. Hall and Hord (2006) noted that a systems view examines the whole and its parts. Within an educational system, the state of these individual parts often dictates the priorities of the organization. Therefore, an examination of these parts may facilitate an understanding of critical features and sequence of an organization's operations. For example, the priority of a school organization at the central administrative level or campus level may be to gain acceptance and implementation of a change.

Rogers's diffusion process and five characteristics of adoption would seem to help forecast the support needed and understanding of the change advocated. However, Rogers (2003) noted that an organization suggesting or demanding a change or adoption of an innovation does not necessarily mean that individuals will immediately implement the innovation. As school districts and campuses consider implementing adoption of RTI, they need a structure that both guides and forecasts the processes of implementing this new approach to addressing the needs of struggling learners. Fullan (1985) explained the goal of an organization is not just to implement the innovation but also to strengthen the capacity of the educational system to identify, consider, implement, and institutionalize appropriate innovations.

RTI can therefore be conceptualized as an innovation or an organizational change. Successful implementation of RTI should be evidenced by improved student learning, the goal of most educational systems. Yet, this goal has not

been systematically reached. Can the adoption-of-innovation paradigm suggest or explain why this goal has not been reached? Is there an inability to properly diffuse and communicate the potential of an effective, multitiered RTI model? Many educational systems across Texas and the United States have begun implementing what leaders consider to be RTI. However, implementation has brought uniqueness and disparity among states, districts, and campuses as they implement this new approach. Applying the process of adoption and diffusion of innovation to RTI may explain and reduce confusion and variance in approaches surrounding RTI. In addition, the diffusion model may clarify what steps educational systems need to take to ensure that RTI is adopted and institutionalized with consistency, accuracy, and congruency within and between organizations.

Despite the reality that variations of definitions of RTI are emerging (Kratochwill, Clements, & Kalymon, 2007), LEAs are implementing their version of an evidence-based intervention or instructional practice to determine the existence of an LD. IDEIA (2004) does allow an LEA to use RTI as part of the evaluation procedure for an LD, and the LEA is not required to consider if a severe discrepancy exists between achievement and intellectual ability. As schools across the country are engaged in this new determination procedure, the result has been variation in policy, practices, and methods of utilization.

Organizational response. The phrase "change is a process, not an event" (Fullan, 1985, p. 392) is an appropriate description of the paradigm shift school systems are working through in their adoption and implementation of RTI. Many school organizations have chosen to implement a model that contains levels of interventions to support struggling learners and call it RTI. This raises the question whether what is being done truly equates to the original intent of RTI. Gerber (2005) identified two critical indicators of student success, opportunity to learn and quality of instruction. If an RTI multitiered framework is going to be implemented systemically, then these indicators must be addressed. Once addressed, the question becomes who is responsible for ensuring the timely and appropriate intervention implementation and progress monitoring. This is an important question that cannot and should not be obfuscated when it comes to determining the existence of LD and the requirement of special education services.

RTI is not a fad and not going away, as it is codified in law. Therefore, it becomes imperative for school systems to prepare for this process. The need for consistently held beliefs, values, and pedagogical implementations system wide is important for ongoing productivity and increased student learning outcomes. As Danek, Calbert, and Chubun (1994) stated, the components essential for system reform are national standards for content, skills, attitude, learning, teaching and

assessing standards, ambitious learning, expectations, and outcomes for all students.

Rogers's (2003) characteristics of adoption of innovation may increase understanding in addressing these RTI implementation adoption issues. For example, do school system staff believe implementing the RTI process will be better or more advantageous for their district? According to Rogers, the more advantageous the school system believes RTI will be for students, the more likely RTI will be adopted system wide. If RTI is seen as, for example, a fad, not particularly better than current practice, will there be a real commitment to RTI concepts and models by the school district? How compatible is RTI with the existing practices and values of the school system? For example, if a school has in place multiple intervention strategies for struggling learners, RTI may be less difficult to implement and may be implemented at a faster rate.

RTI is multifaceted, with numerous and varied definitions and tiers (including no one single model being advocated nor mandated). That is to say, RTI is complex. Adoption-of-innovation characteristics would suggest this complexity in the implementation of RTI, such as time for sharing information, provision of training, and allocation of resources, requires implementation on a small scale at first. Such trialability could address issues and attempt solutions before mandated systemic implementation. This piloting would allow observability, providing transparency and visibility for others, increasing their

support for an adoption decision. Such visibility could promote dialogue about what needs to happen for successful full-scale implementation of RTI.

Adopter categorization. Rogers (2003) has identified five adopter categories based primarily on speed of adoption of innovativeness: (a) innovators, (b) early adopters, (c) early majority, (d) later majority, and (e) laggards. The adopters in the early-majority and late-majority categories tend to adopt just before and after the average member of the system, with the early majority making up one third of a system's membership (Rogers, 2003). If measured properly, innovativeness is a continuous variable with no chasms between adjacent adopter categories (Rogers, 2003).

Rogers (2003) equated the *innovator* with being venturesome. The vital role of the innovator is often to inform and diffuse the innovation, introducing the new ideas into the system. Often, because of this venturesome spirit, the innovator is seen as a risk taker, and other members of the social system may be wary of this person's ideas. For example, an advocacy of the concept of an alternative method to identify students having a specific LD other than an IQ and achievement-tested discrepancy might be seen as the behavior of an innovator.

Early adopters, according to Rogers (2003), are often the most respected leaders within a social system. The early adopter is sought by change agents in the diffusion process and is critical when a system is adopting an innovation. If RTI is going to be implemented system wide, individuals of respect in their

system would need to be seen as supportive of the concept. These people are most likely to be "ahead of the game" in knowledge and skill and to understand the resources and components required to implement RTI.

The *early majority* have an important role in the adoption process because, neither leading nor following, they join larger numbers of system personnel as the innovation takes hold and begins to be more a standard part of the organization's response to something new or innovative. Once most of the uncertainties have been removed, the *late majority* succumbs to peer pressure to adopt. Considering the adoption of RTI, early- and late-majority adopters would be those "doing RTI because everyone else is," or because it is seen as a standard practice (Rogers, 2003, p. 254).

Laggards would be those last in a system to adopt an innovation. They are suspicious, critical, or indifferent to the innovation and may be required to adopt the innovation by those in authority or at least become convinced that a new idea will not fail (Rogers, 2003). RTI would need a proven record for laggards to support its implementation or evidence of improvement over current practice. They would be reluctant to support RTI implementation until data show positive outcomes for students. Laggards might ask, "What is wrong with what we have been doing all along? Why do we need to do this now?"

There is work (Yates et al., 2010) indicating that RTI is being implemented at different rates in educational systems; thus, Rogers's (2003)

categories of adoption may inform systems and allow the categorization of educational systems in terms of their rate of adoption of the innovation RTI. Rogers's work may be particularly helpful in understanding that educational systems, for a variety of reasons, may not be implementing RTI in the same ways, using dissimilar approaches and levels of commitment to the innovation. This conception may prove helpful in understanding these system differences, even though the professional literature may be suggesting or assuming that RTI is standardized or perhaps presented in the literature as "fully" implemented. The professional literature appears to be ignoring different rates of adoption and appears to assume that educational systems are at the same point in the rate of adoption of the RTI innovation. Additionally, applying Rogers's theory of adoption to the context of RTI could provide evidence of the efficacy of his adoption theory to the procedures and processes commonly found in educational organizations. With the range of external requirements for "change and adoption" currently present in educational organizations, determination of the usefulness of Rogers's theory to this context could be enormously helpful in guiding educational organizations as they respond to these external pressures for change.

In conjunction with the adoption of innovation, other organizational theory may prove helpful in examining educational systems response to RTI. For example, systems theory and the dynamics of tightly and loosely coupled systems also may provide explanations regarding RTI initiatives at the federal, state, and

local levels. Wieck (1982) has explained that school systems are unique organizations, "loosely coupled," meaning that many of the links between elements within school systems are weak or interdependent of each other. This is exemplified by the layering of personnel that often occurs in educational settings. When an interventionist provides support to a student, a layer between the student and the teacher or the student and the administrator is "inserted and control over the student is loosened" (Wieck, 1982, p. 673), thereby only increasing the potential for a lack of knowing how to best meet the needs of that individual learner.

When there are efforts to strengthen alignment of parts of the larger systemic organizations, it is an attempt to "tighten the coupling" (Hall & Hord, 2006, p. 57). Hall and Hord (2006) noted, "For systemic change to work, the components of the system must have sufficiently tight coupling so as to work with maximum interdependence" (p. 57). RTI requires a tightening or alignment of many parts of the system: special education, general education, special services personnel, central office and campus level administration, and parents. Questions of implementation and success of these newer organization policies and procedures of RTI may be clarified by examination in the context of certain organization theory.

Chapter 3: Methods of Procedure

This study sought to examine whether Rogers's (2003) theory of adoption of innovation was applicable to educational systems implementing RTI. Rogers's conceptual characteristics of adoption of innovation may be a method for school leaders and educational policy makers to forecast the necessary elements required for successful implementation of systemic RTI. Shapiro (2011) noted, "There is a need for on-the-ground examples of RTI and all its components . . . the expected sequence of events leading to school wide change, what to predict when implementing RTI models, and what is not predictable" (p. xiii). Using an existing database of K-12 educators' held perceptions of RTI, these responses were sorted into Rogers's five adoption-of-innovation characteristics. The distribution of perceptions was examined for unique characteristics, differences, and commonalities associated with RTI. This examination was designed to identify potential areas of facilitation and resistance to the adoption of innovation and to suggest time lines that might be expected for the adoption.

The data collection and analysis procedures were designed to produce qualitative data to enhance understanding of the adoption-of-innovation processes and to provide insight into the status and timelines for adoption of RTI in schools. Qualitative data, according to Miles (1979), is an attractive research method because the data are "rich, full, earthy, holistic, and real" (p. 590). Another strength and characteristic of qualitative data, according to Miles, is that the data

"in principle offer a far more precise way to assess causality in organizational affairs like cross-lagged correlations" (p. 590). In addition to these benefits, the purpose of analyzing qualitative data is to define categories in order to ascertain relationships and assumptions that inform the respondents' view of the world in general and of the topic in particular (McCracken, as cited in Basit, 2003). Therefore, utilizing qualitative methods in the study of educators' perceptions of RTI within the theoretical framework of Rogers's (2003) adoption of innovation allowed for an enhanced opportunity to truly capture the unique characteristics, differences, and commonalities in these held perceptions. Capturing educators' perceptions of RTI using qualitative methods provided a means to examine their perceptions of RTI and to determine whether these data could provide forecasts of the status of educational systems in implementing RTI and identify likely inhibitors and facilitators of the adoption process.

Description of Existing Database

A national study in 2010, using a random sample of general and special education administrators, instructional personnel, and support personnel (e.g., counselors, diagnosticians, speech and language therapists, and school psychologists) on elementary and high school campuses and in central offices produced a database of held perceptions of RTI. The responses of 554 randomly selected participants provided a database of held perceptions of RTI (see Appendix A). The e-mails to participants for inclusion in the survey were

distributed to all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Participants responded to open-ended questions that allowed the respondents to enter unstructured information or comments. These unstructured responses related to RTI formed the database for this study. The qualitative narrative comments were used to test Rogers (2003) of adoption of innovation and examination of the characteristics of innovation.

Steps of Procedure

Instrumentation. A coding matrix was developed to organize the narrative responses captured in the national study into Rogers's (2003) five characteristics of innovation: (a) relative advantage, (b) compatibility, (c) complexity, (d) trialability, and (e) observability. Responses were rated using a Likert scale of 0 (*not applicable*), 1 (*low*), 2 (*medium low*), 3 (*medium high*), and 4 (*high*) in terms of to what extent the narrative response reflected the characteristics of adoption.

Rating panel and their training. The American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education (1985) prescribed expert panelists to meet three criteria in a content-review process: have (a) relevant training, (b) experience, and (c) formal qualifications. The 11 panelists had professional experience and certifications in special education administration, general education administration, special education instruction, and health and human services. In

addition, they had advanced graduate training in general and special education instruction, administration, and special services. Peer debriefing was utilized to enhance the data review process and ensure confidence in the data validity. Peer review and debriefing as a strategy to improve research and mitigate concerns regarding validity has been addressed through previous works (Cochran, 2009).

All of the panelists were trained in (a) the conceptual and pragmatic applications of Rogers's (2003) characteristics of innovation and the adoption-of-innovation processes, (b) use of the coding matrix, and (c) practice of rating Rogers's five characteristics using simulations to classify held perceptions of RTI. Training was provided in two training and consensus-measuring sessions.

The first part of the first training session was a formal, 30-minute, PowerPoint-assisted lecture presented by the researcher that focused on Rogers's (2003) conceptions of the adoption-of-innovation processes and the history of using Rogers's characteristics to evaluate innovation-adoption processes. The lecture was followed by an additional hour of discussion and questions among panelists seeking clarification and enhanced understanding of Rogers's characteristics and the use of the conceptions in understanding the adoption-of-innovation processes. These discussions were followed by exposure to a draft coding matrix to capture and classify perceptions of RTI. Panelists provided feedback and suggestions in writing for improvement of the coding instrument for capturing and classifying RTI perceptions.

The second training session consisted of panelists engaging in simulated classification of the RTI perceptions into a revised coding matrix. It should be noted that one panelist missed the group training and was trained individually.

Panelists' individual responses were captured by a wireless response system, the Keypoint Interactive audience response system (Innovision, 2012). This system utilized wireless keypads that registered real-time interactions between the panelists and the stimulus items. The Keypoint system presented panelists' responses within a 10-second period in a graph, allowing all to see the consistency of ratings among panelists. The effect of a panelist's classification was visible to all panelists, although the specific panelist's responses were anonymous.

The Keypoint system allowed a seamlessly integrated plug-in of PowerPoint slides of the characteristics of innovation and the coding matrix. For approximately 1.5 hours, panelists practiced classifying RTI perceptions into Rogers's (2003) five characteristics of innovation, and their responses were captured by the Keypoint system. (Note that the training session scale of 1–5 differed from the final matrix scale of 0–4 because the Keypoint system would not allow a response of 0; however, 0 was used in the final matrix to allow panelists to indicate that the perception was unrelated to any of Rogers's characteristics of innovations.)

In this simulation training session, each panelist coded five items from the original 408 open-ended responses to, "Tell us about RTI in your school or district." Each panelist made a total of 25 classification decisions according to Rogers's (2003) five adoption characteristics during training. After responding to each item, there was group discussion of panelist responses, rationale for the response, and questions or concerns regarding Rogers's (2003) conceptions and characteristics-of-innovation classification of the RTI perceptions. Discrepancies in panelists' classifications were discussed and reclassifications made by panelists until the graphs created by the Keypoint interactive system reflected consensus. The training items were as follows:

1. "We have a team well established in our school that has been using RTI for several years."
2. "Ignored; not dealt with; a meaningless buzzword."
3. "Very data driven, required on our IEPs [individualized education plans]."
4. "There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."
5. "We are currently utilizing RTI in our district."

The actions of establishing consensus among panel members were parallel to measures often utilized in Delphi procedures for gathering expert panel consensus. "The Delphi procedure is a widely used and accepted method for

gathering data from respondents within their domain of expertise" **(**Hsu & Sandford, 2007, para. 1). Educating panel members about the diverse and interrelated issues regarding Rogers's (2003) theory of adoption of innovation and his conceptual categories was achieved through the training process along with ascertaining whether a group consensus of at least 50% per adoption category for each response item could be established.

Figures 1–5 indicate the developing levels of consensus among the panelists and their ability to rate similarly the RTI perceptions utilizing Rogers's (2003) categories and to determine the level or impact of the classification on the RTI perceptions. Figures 1–5 give an example of the developing consensus of ratings among panelist to categorizing the statement, "There is currently no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue." The figures represent 10 panelists' responses (recall one panelist was not present at this training session, so there are 10 responses rather than 11).

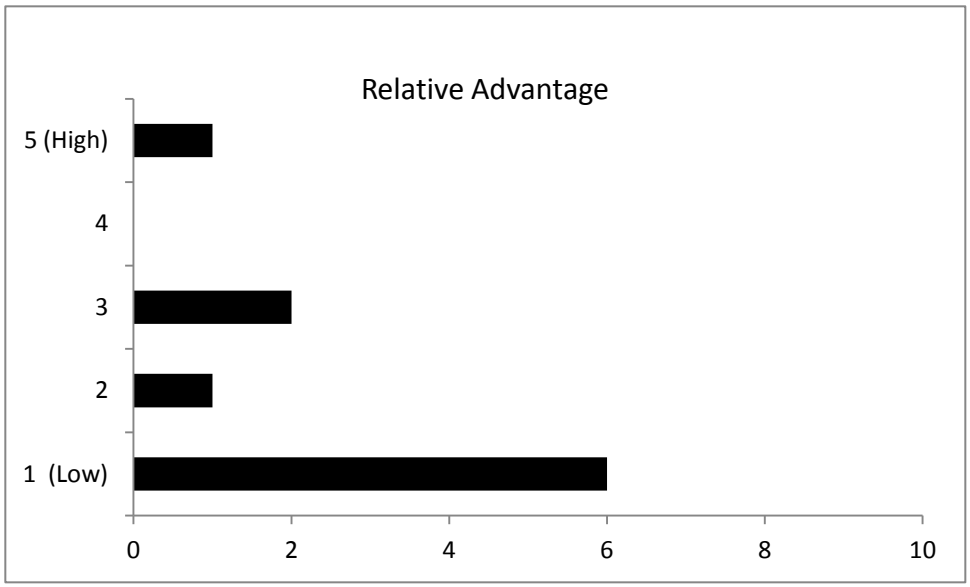

Figure 1. Ratings of panelists on relative advantage related to the statement, "There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."

Only 9 of the 10 panelists categorized the response as relative advantage (Figure 1). Six considered this statement to rank *low* (1) in the relative-advantage category, meaning the majority of the panelists considered the response did not indicate the benefits of implementing RTI. The one panelist that gave the *high* (5) ranking stated she "misunderstood between the 1 and 5."

Seven panelists ranked the statement on compatibility (Figure 2). Of these, six agreed, ranking the statement as *low* (1) in the category of compatibility because it did indicate how RTI is compatible with the existing values of the district. The remaining scoring panelist rated it fairly low as well, with a 2.

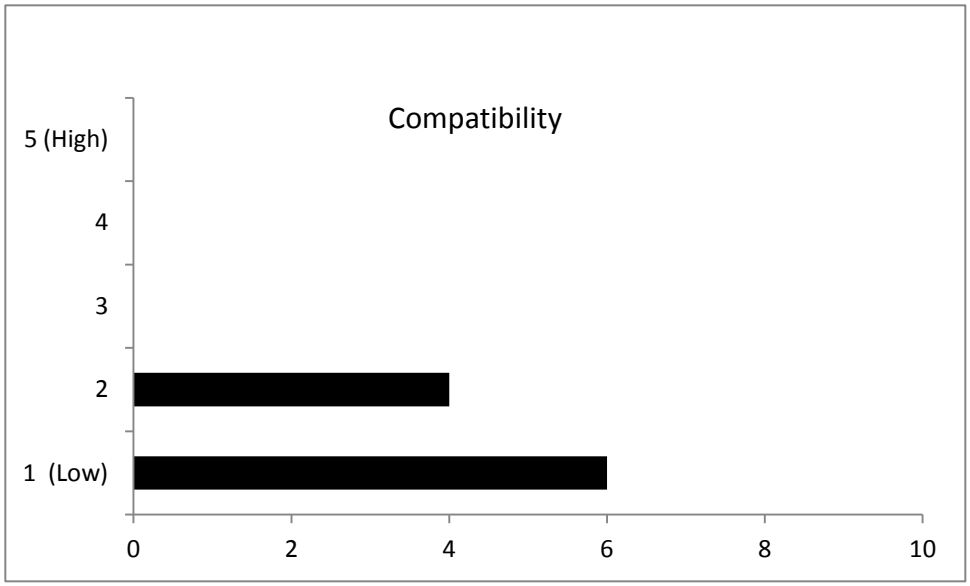

Figure 2. Ratings of panelists on compatibility related to the statement, "There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."

All 10 panelists scored the response on complexity (Figure 3). Seven panelists agreed that this statement earned a ranking of *low* (1) in the category of complexity. The majority of panelists did not see the overall attributes of difficulty in understanding and use of RTI reflected in this statement, thereby giving it a low score. The remaining three panelists' scores showed that because there was "no real RTI program," the statement was indicative of how much of a challenge it is to implement.

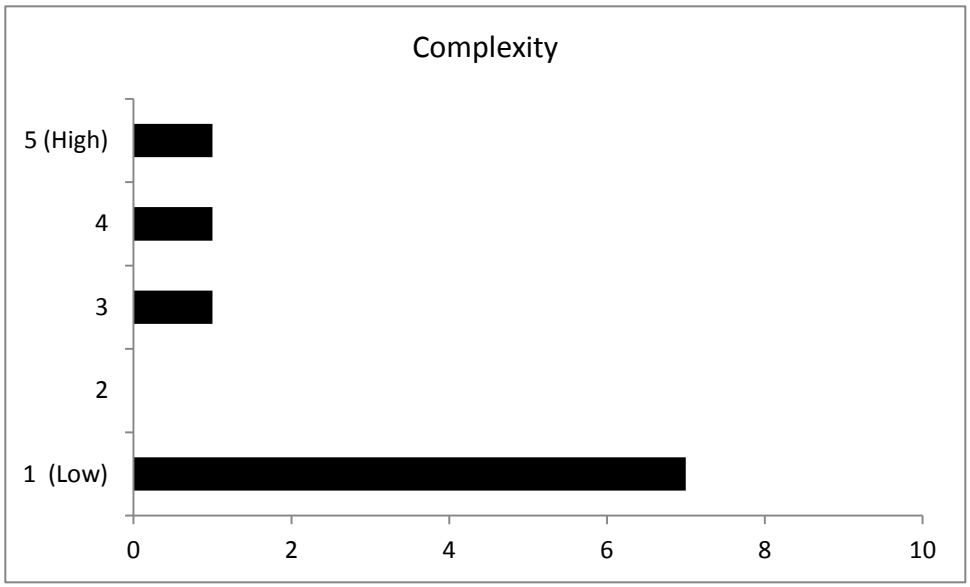

Figure 3. Ratings of panelists on complexity related to the statement, "There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."

All 10 panelists scored the statement as ranking *low* (1) in the trialability category (Figure 4). All panelists agreed this response did not reflect a degree of piloting or trying out RTI on a limited basis before wide-scale implementation.

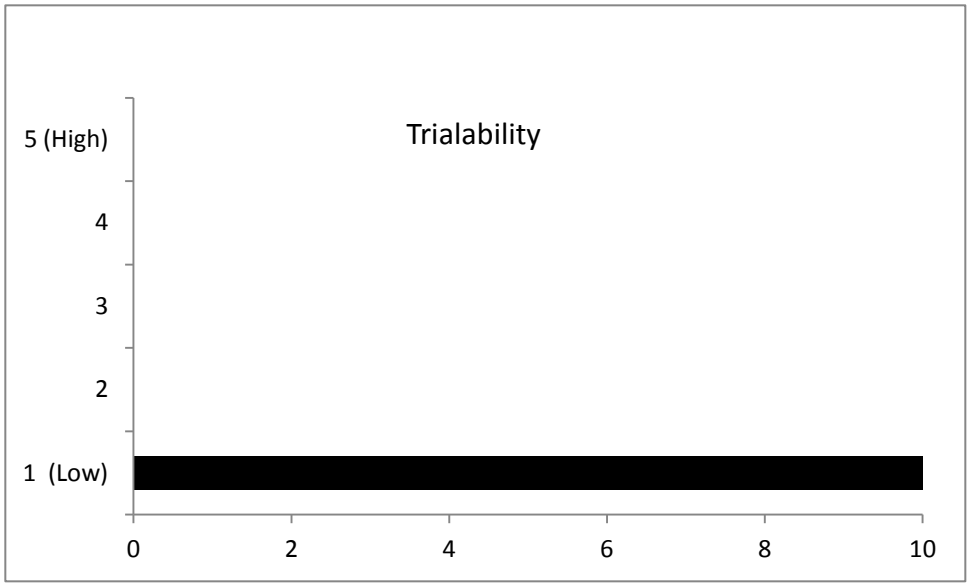

Figure 4. Ratings of panelists on trialability related to the statement, "There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."

Eight out of 10 panelists reached consensus the statement did not indicate that RTI had been visible to these respondents, thereby warranting the *low* (1) ranking (Figure 5). One other panel member also scored it fairly low with a ranking of 2. The high ranking of 5 was explained by a panel member "as a mistake with using the keypad."

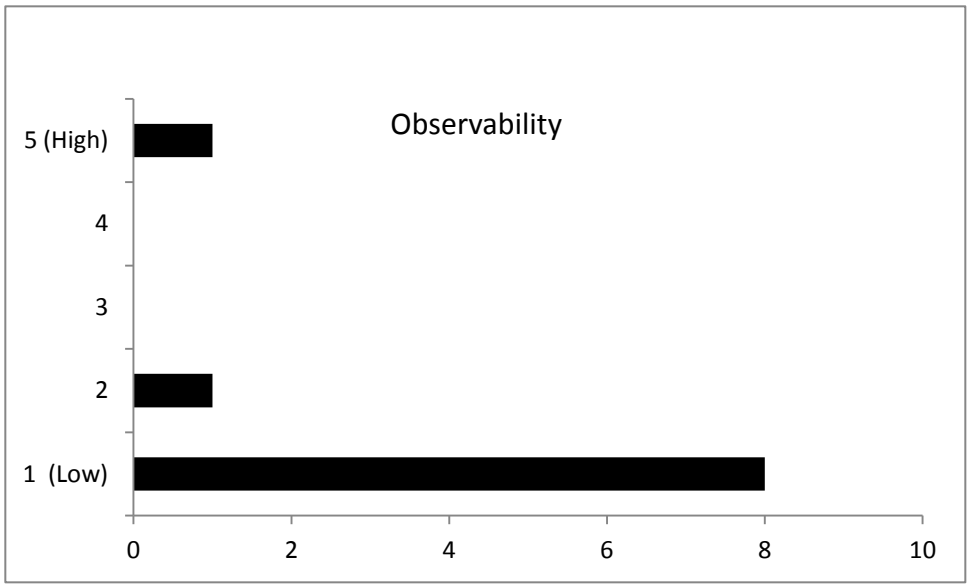

Figure 5. Ratings of panelists on observability related to the statement, "There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."

Table 1 presents detailed information on consensus training data for each simulation-training perception of RTI response. Information provided in Table 1 includes the number of panelists ranking items on a scale from 1 (*low*) to 5 (*high*) for each response during training.

Table 1

Number of Panelists Making Each Rating During Training

Statement and adoption characteristic	1 (low)	2	3	4	5 (high)
"We have a team well established in our school that has been using RTI [response to intervention] for several years."					
Relative advantage	0	0	2	1	7
Compatibility	0	0	0	1	9
Complexity	2	6	1	1	0
Trialability	8	0	0	0	2
Observability	0	0	1	1	8
"Ignored; not dealt with; a meaningless buzzword."					
Relative advantage	4	6	0	0	0
Compatibility	2	8	0	0	0
Complexity	5	2	0	1	2
Trialability	8	2	0	0	0
Observability	7	2	1	0	0
"Very data driven, required on our IEPs [individualized education plans]."					
Relative advantage	6	1	1	1	1
Compatibility	3	3	1	1	2
Complexity	2	2	1	0	5
Trialability	5	3	0	0	2
Observability	2	1	3	0	4
"There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue."					
Relative advantage	6	1	2	0	1
Compatibility	6	4	0	0	0
Complexity	7	0	1	1	1
Trialability	10	0	0	0	0
Observability	8	1	0	0	1
"We are currently utilizing RTI in our district."					
Relative advantage	5	1	1	2	1
Compatibility	6	1	1	1	1
Complexity	10	0	0	0	0
Trialability	10	0	0	0	0
Observability	1	0	1	2	6

Pilot testing of coding processes via e-mail. Upon completion of the training, the coding instrument was placed into Microsoft Excel for presentation to a sample of panelists via e-mail. This pilot was conducted to determine whether there were issues when the coding instrument was presented via e-mail. Five panelists participated in the pilot. The pilot included 10 RTI perception items:

1. "We are working on level one with high school students. We have flagged students due to their results on reading tests and attendance along with behavior."
2. "Some schools have completely incorporated RTI into their school wide programs; others are still working to get to that point."
3. "Some schools have completely incorporated RTI into their school wide programs; others are still working to get to that point."
4. "Just beginning to use."
5. "K-5 program being expanded to middle and high schools. Model after state program."
6. "RTI has been implemented."
7. "Pilot programs being developed at specific levels. Implementation being conducted for review and response to areas of difficulty."
8. "RTI seems to have good intentions, but often is putting me in a difficult position to find more time to create or administer materials to

gather data which is then used to see how a student fares against what is considered normal."

9. "We don't use it yet."
10. "We struggle to work RTI into the high school since we see so many students each day."

The pilot process confirmed that through the e-mail process the coding instrument had the ability to capture responses, and only minor aesthetic adjustments were necessary. The final coding matrix provided descriptions and definitions of Rogers's (2003) characteristics of adoption and a Likert scale for rating each RTI perception according to the five characteristics of innovation (see Appendix B).

Coding matrix data. In total, 408 narrative or open-ended responses were contained in the database from the national study of perceptions of RTI. The panelists recorded their classifications of the perceptions on the coding matrix e-mailed to them. Each panelist was given 36 randomly selected open-ended responses extracted from the "Tell us about RTI in your school or district." national sample data base. Panelists were given 1 week to code responses and return their classifications via e-mail. All data were aggregated and compiled into one Microsoft Excel document.

Data analysis. The data gathered from the expert panel demonstrated how the unique characteristics, differences, and commonalities of educators'

perceptions about RTI could be sorted into Rogers's (2003) conceptual categories. Data analysis included calculation of central tendency mean and mode from panelists' ratings.

Chapter 4: Results

An analysis of the panelist classifications of K-12 educators' perceptions of RTI is shown in Tables 2 and 3. Appendix C presents the aggregate data of all 11 panelists' ranking of the 408 educator responses into Rogers's (2003) five adoption-of-innovation categories.

Table 2

Number of Panelist Classifications of Responses to Survey Item: "Tell us About RTI in Your School or District"

Adoption characteristic	Score				
	0	1	2	3	4
Relative advantage	268	35	41	36	28
Compatibility	213	47	58	58	32
Complexity	295	28	34	37	14
Trialability	238	26	44	61	39
Observability	173	36	57	69	73

Note. Total responses scored = 408. Scores on a scale of 0 = *not applicable*, 1 = *low*, 2 = *medium low*, 3 = *medium high*, and 4 = *high*. RTI = response to intervention.

Table 3

Average, Median, and Mode of Panelist Classifications of Responses

Adoption characteristic	Average	Median	Mode	Total
Relative advantage	0.83	0	0	337
Compatibility	1.15	0	0	465
Complexity	0.65	0	0	263
Trialability	1.12	0	0	453
Observability	1.59	1	0	645

Note. Averages from scores on a scale of 0 = *not applicable,* 1 = *low,* 2 = *medium low*, 3 = *medium high*, and 4 = *high*.

Results for Research Question 1

When educational practitioners perceptions of RTI are sorted into Rogers's five adoption characteristics, what unique aspects, differences, and commonalities exist in the perceptions held? The data collected are presented by adoption characteristic.

Observability. Data collected from the panelists' classifications indicated that Rogers's adoption characteristic of observability was the most frequently reoccurring code, capturing a total combined score of 645, as noted in Table 3. Educators perceived that RTI was visible to some extent in their school or district. Therefore, due to this apparent visibility, this particular category had the greatest number of codes. The data in Table 2 show that this adopter category captured 73 of the highest rankings of 4, which was 5 times more than the lowest ranked

category of trialability, which only captured 14 high ratings. Appreciating the importance of transparency in the adoption of innovation is imperative. If educational leaders are going to try and mandate implementation of RTI on a wide scale, deciding upon ways that individuals and schools can see RTI programs and processes in action will be of obvious benefit and a likely predictor in forecasting what is needed to develop an RTI framework that will improve student learning outcomes.

Compatibility. Compatibility was the second-most frequently occurring category identified by all panelists, as noted in Table 3, with a total sum score of all ratings equaling 465. Panelists concurred that a majority of the responses were *not applicable* to the compatibility category, reflecting the large number of 213 as indicated in Table 2. However, in the ranking of other responses, panelists assigned a total of 47 low scores of 1 and 32 high scores of 5. These rankings might indicate that educators had difficulty seeing RTI as being consistent with their existing values, practice, norms, and potential needs of utilizing RTI as a method to identify specific LDs. The data also reflected that educators were having common experiences (given that only 15 points separated the lowest score of 47 from the highest score of 32) related to reconciling integrating RTI into the daily routine of school practices with continuing business as usual.

Trialability. Panelists ranked trialability as the third-highest ranking category, with a sum total of all scores equaling 453. Panelists coded 238

responses as *not applicable* in this category. Trialability had the fewest rankings of the low score of 1, totaling 26, and the second greatest number of the high ratings of 4 as well as medium high ratings of 3 among all the categories, totaling 39 and 61, respectively (see Table 2). The data regarding trialability reflected the common practice of RTI being implemented on a small scale, such as just in the elementary grade levels or only in the early primary grades in elementary school. Furthermore, the data indicated that educators appreciated that small-scale implementation of RTI is prudent so processes and systems can be worked through prior to wide-scale implementation.

Relative advantage. Relative advantage was given a total sum score of 337. The differences in the low and high scores in this category were minimal. A difference of 7 points separated the low ranking (35) and the high ranking (28), as shown in Table 2. Given the close rankings in this category, one can surmise that educators were uncertain as to how RTI was going to be better than traditional methods for LD identification. Recognizing this uncertainty, leaders wanting to launch a successful large-scale implementation of RTI would be advised to understand the importance of the concept of relative advantage, because they will need to make efforts to ensure implementers understand the benefits of RTI.

Complexity. Panelists coded complexity as the lowest ranking category, totaling 263. The 1(low) rankings totaled 28 and the 4 (high) rankings totaled 14 (see Table 2). Panelists coded 295 responses as rating *not applicable* in the

category of complexity. Interestingly, the common description among educators was that implementing RTI was not particularly problematic or difficult.

Based on the descriptive data, there is a need for further examination of several important issues occurring in schools implementing RTI.

1. If RTI is operationalized, educators should be able to see it being implemented (observability).
2. RTI is not necessarily perceived as any more or less challenging than other things educators are already doing (complexity).
3. Educators are not seeing the advantages of RTI (relative advantage).
4. Despite not seeing what the advantages of RTI are, educators claim to perceive it as being compatible with their pedagogical philosophies and beliefs (compatability).
5. The ability for schools and educators to implement RTI on a trial basis would facilitate the likelihood of a faster rate of systemic implementation, both at the campus and district level (trialability).

Results for Research Question 2

Do Rogers's (2003) characteristics of innovations and sequence of adoption forecast RTI implementation in educational organizations? The data are presented by characteristic in the sections that follow.

Observability. Observability, according to Rogers (2003), is how visible the innovation is to others. The sum total ranking for observability was 645, as

shown in Table 3, the highest total of all the adoption characteristics. In addition to receiving the largest sum total ranking, observability also attained the greatest number of ratings of 4 (*high*), totaling 73. Survey response items such as "response to intervention is a district-wide initiative on academic intervention strategies," "We do use RTI and discuss it frequently," and "RTI is being done on a daily basis" demonstrated the visibility quality captured by panelists of this characteristic discussed by Rogers. However, if RTI is fully operationalized, it means that these operations are visible and transparent to others as programs, processes, and systems are implemented with fidelity. This visibility of operations with RTI is not universally occurring, as several comments earned a rating of 1 (*low*) such as:

1. "I am vaguely aware of it."
2. "It is not being used in the buildings. Very little progress monitoring takes place with differentiated interventions being used."
3. "Administration has been attending workshops regarding RTI. Special Education Staffing hasn't attended any workshops, so I am not real familiar with it. I know a little but not enough."

If educational organizations want to ensure innovations like RTI will be adopted, promoting transparency in processes increases that likelihood.

Compatibility. The characteristic of compatibility had a total sum of 465 ratings. Compatibility can be interpreted as respondents believing that RTI is

compatible with their educational philosophies, values, and practices. Several comments by respondents demonstrated this characteristic of compatibility:

1. "Our district is educating every teacher about RTI. We are using it in all of our schools. Every school has weekly RTI meetings. We have an RTI director for the district."
2. "We have [had] RTI for 4 years in our Elementary School. We are working to complete the rubric for our state. Last year we started Reading RTI at Middle School and this year RTI for Math. RTI training for both Middle School and High School is starting this year."
3. "I am on the district wide RTI team. We started it in Elementary three years ago and are now implementing it in secondary as well."

Interestingly, RTI as a new approach was seen as not that different than current practice, or, perhaps schools are familiar with requirements of new practices and RTI as "just" another required new practice.

Trialability. The sum total of ratings for this characteristic was 453 including 39 ratings 4 (*high*). A high trialability score indicates that survey respondents recognized that RTI was not being implemented universally at their individual campus or district. Instead, it was only being implemented in specific places such as a particular grade level or for a particular subject. As Rogers (2003) indicated, trialability is the experimentation of an innovation on a limited basis. This limited-basis implementation is evidenced in comments such as:

1. “It is currently being implemented at one elementary school as a pilot project.”
2. “We use this strategy for lower elementary students and still expanding, but do not currently identify SPED [special education] students via this method exclusively.”
3. “Elementary level has RTI implemented in the school and is putting it to practice, MS/HS is just beginning the process.”
4. “RTI is ‘in the works’ for the lower grades—it has not been implemented in [Grades] 8–12.”

As LEAs work through their system implementation issues of RTI, it may be prudent for school districts and campuses to examine another facet of trialability as noted by Rogers (2003). Novel ideas that can be implemented on a small scale are likely to have a faster rate of adoption than those new ideas that are mandated to be fully implemented. In addition, trialability allows for improvement in a model. This allowance for improvement is important to educators because often in academic settings the luxury of having a control group and an intervention group is not common. Because trialability permits small-scale implementation, educational systems that make use of trialability may increase their likelihood of successful adoption.

Relative advantage. Relative advantage ranked as the fourth out of five adoption characteristics by panel members, with a total summative score of 337. The determining factor of relative advantage of RTI for educators is ascertaining whether there is an advantage of RTI to the traditional assessment model. Respondents' perspective regarding the advantages of RTI is noted in the following statements:

1. "Our school is using RTI as one method of determining learning disabilities in students. We have a strong intervention model that is used prior to special education evaluation."
2. "Used to customize the level of support students need to be successful."
3. "RTI in my district is a spectrum of services and interventions based on a prescribed step-by-step process (the RTI pyramid). Each level has different interventions depending on the students needs. The RTI team for our school meets weekly to help teachers who have struggling learners with interventions and resources."

If educators believe RTI to be more advantageous than previously implemented instructional frameworks, then the likelihood the adoption of RTI increases. If educators do not see the benefits and advantages of RTI, it will not be implemented, or will be so more slowly. Relative advantage is critical in forecasting the future of a RTI adoption.

Complexity. Complexity was the lowest ranked characteristic by panel members. Only 14 items were assigned the rating of 4 (*high*), totaling 263 ratings for this adoption trait. One interpretation of these data are that educators are often inundated with "new requirements" and thus implementing components of RTI is perceived as no more difficult than routine requests and expectations. This interpretation was evidenced in comments regarding RTI: (a) "Multiple training sessions, execution in the classroom" and (b) "We have an RTI group that meets weekly and we have built in intervention blocks every day." An additional interpretation of the low ranking of complexity is an indication of how varied is the systemic implementation of RTI. These varied responses included:

1. "Not currently implemented."
2. "Provide RTI services to students in the area of Reading, Math and Behavior."
3. "Ignored; not dealt with; a meaningless buzzword."
4. "We have a team well established in our school that has been using RTI for several years."

Data Summary

The largest rating of RTI across the Rogers characteristics of innovation was "not applicable." This suggests that practitioners' narrative comments of RTI are not compatible with the theoretical concepts of adoption of innovation. The

wide variance in perceptions expressed suggests RTI for a variety of reasons is not being considered by school as an innovation under adoption.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Results

The purpose of this study was to examine educators' perceptions of RTI as related to Rogers's (2003) framework of adoption of innovation. Specifically, this study examined the unique characteristics, differences, and commonalities that exist when perceptions of RTI are sorted into Rogers's five adoption characteristics. In addition, this study examined how Rogers's characteristics of innovations and sequence of adoption may forecast RTI implementation in educational organizations. Organizational theory and Rogers's conceptions of adoption of innovation provided a lens to extrapolate and interpret the study's findings.

The adoption-of-innovation construct includes a time-ordered sequence of (a) knowledge, (b) persuasion, (c) decision, (d) implementation, and (e) confirmation. This sequence of events in the adoption of the innovation RTI, along with the five adopter categories of (a) innovators, (b) early adopters, (c) early majority, (d) later majority, and (e) laggards, provided a means to examine the data gathered and to extrapolate meaning and suggestion for future work related to RTI and its adoption.

Knowledge

Rogers (2003) described the knowledge stage in the innovation-decision process as the beginning. It is in the knowledge stage when "the individual learns of the existence of the innovation and gains an understanding of how it functions"

(Rogers, 2003, p. 171). The knowledge of RTI has developed in differing ways, and at times this knowledge was expressed with extreme variations of understanding. In this study some educators expressed a thorough knowledge and understanding of RTI and how it was being utilized in their school or district. For example, one respondent explained,

> At-risk students are presented with multiple strategies and interventions designed through the use of quality assessments and data collections and consistently monitored for improvement. Changes are made to the inter ventions if the RTI team believes additional achievements can be made.

Yet, in contrast, some respondents saw RTI simply as a "place" or placement for students in need of remediation: "We have an intervention study hall for ALL students who have zeroes or submit incomplete or inferior work," or RTI is a "classroom that helps struggling students." Just because someone knows something about an innovation does not mean he or she has accurate or in-depth knowledge supportive of the innovation. Knowledge of the innovation also does not assure accurate or correct implementation of the innovation. Rogers (2003) commented that simply obtaining basic knowledge about a novel idea will not define how relevant the innovation will be to the individual. If a sufficient level of knowledge about an innovation is not obtained, then the next stage in the process, persuasion towards the innovation, cannot occur. The data of this study would suggest that the wide variance in the knowledge levels about RTI predicts schools adopting RTI with a wide variance in the quantity and quality of the application of

the RTI for struggling learners, forecasting difficulty with accurate, useful application of RTI concepts in schools.

Persuasion

The second stage in the innovation-decision process is persuasion. Rogers (2003) described persuasion as the formation of a "favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation" (p. 175). During the persuasion stage, the individual becomes more emotionally involved with the innovation and, as Rogers noted, the attributes of relative advantage, compatibility, and complexity become more paramount. The assignment of attributes to RTI and the psychological involvement that individuals begin having are reflected in comments:

1. "Used effectively to meet the needs of our students, lots of resources available for students, staff, parents."
2. "In the third year of using RtI and it is going well in reading and mathematics."
3. " Not doing it well just discussion and some progress monitoring."
4. "It does not work."

Rogers (2003) stated, "The main outcome of the persuasion stage in the innovation-decision process is a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation" (p. 176). An assumption of this process is that once an attitude towards the innovation is formed, an overt change in behavior will occur.

Educators expressing satisfaction with RTI and its successes are likely to continue with implementation making it easier for them to move away from the traditional paradigm of IQ and achievement assessment discrepancy for determination of LD. However, those expressing discontentment with RTI would be expected to maintain the status quo, utilizing the "waiting-to-fail" model for a student who may have a LD.

Decision

Rogers's (2003) description of the decision stage highlighted the significance of adoption and rejection of an innovation:

> The innovation-decision process takes place when an individual (or other decision-making unit) engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject an innovation. *Adoption* is a decision to make full use of an innovation as the best course of action available. *Rejection* is a decision not to adopt an innovation. (p. 177)

Since the federal law allows the use of RTI, conceptually, educators have the option of selecting or rejecting RTI. However, respondents' comments reflected a range of understanding of the option of utilizing (adopting) RTI or not installing RTI. For example, the following comments appear to ignore the possibility of adoption or nonadoption of RTI:

1. "We are creating the structure at the county and the frameworks for each school. Teams, Process, Documentation, Support for Instruction, Tiered Intervention Ideas, Collaboration."

2. "We are in the initial stages. We are just engaging in initial planning for implementation at the central office level. However, there are initiatives in the district that are consistent with and can be incorporated into RtI."
3. "We recently completed an application for RTI Cohort School Division."
4. "Discussed but no real protocol for tiered service."
5. "TST/RTI A program developed by our Superintendent addresses any concerns that hinder the students success. (Academic or Behavior) and allows the Teachers and/or Administrators to create and write plans addressing those concerns."

These last two educators' statements may be what Rogers (2003) referred to as *passive rejection*. Passive rejection is when the use of the innovation, in this case RTI, was never truly considered but one does not gain a feeling that the respondent was given an option of adoption or nonadoption. Given that RTI has been permitted since the reauthorization of IDEIA (2004) and now, several years later, is simply being "discussed" makes one conclude that a passive decision to reject the innovation has been made without moving through the stages of adoption of innovation.

Implementation

The stages preceding the implementation period, according to Rogers (2003), are a "strictly mental exercise of thinking and deciding" (p. 179), because it is at the implementation stage when an individual puts the innovation to use. An aspect of putting the innovation to use is the concept of *reinvention.* Rogers defined reinvention as "the degree to which an innovation is changed or modified by a user in the process of its adoption and implementation" (p. 150). The perceived intricacies involved in implementing RTI and the apparent need to reinvent or alter practice were confirmed by participant statements:

1. RTI is fairly new to our district (approximately 3 years) it has been adopted as a means of implementing tier level reading instruction at the elementary school. Components of the RTI process are currently being used during the referral to special education process at all grade levels.

2. We have an RTI process for struggling students. They must go through the RTI process and try different interventions before they can be referred to 504 or Special Ed. Teachers are required to fill out an RTI package that documents the students data and intervention that have been tried, how long they have had these intervention and what is the progress of the student after these intervention have been put into place. We do this for educational needs and behavior needs.

3. We started a SMILE (support and motivation in a learning environment) where all the professionals in our school get together to discuss resources and interventions for a student. The classroom teacher gathers documentation of efforts made with the use of these interventions and resources.

4. We follow a system called IDM or Instructional Decision Making. We collect data and keep track of every student's reading and math scores. Based on these scores, teacher observation and/or intervention data,

> we make an instructional decision. We follow a tier system but do not call it such.

Since RTI is conceptualized and operationalized as not federally mandated, LEAs are allowed to implement the process in a manner that they believe is best for their district. When an innovation like RTI has been developed, adapted, or modified to meet the needs of a specific organization, such as a campus or district, one might expect reinvention of the innovation. Hall and Hord (2006) noted, "The tendency to adapt, modify and/or mutate aspects of innovations is a natural part of the change process . . . beginning with uncertainty about what is supposed to be done" (p. 113). As noted in the respondents' comments, implementation of RTI as well as reinvention or modification does appear to be occurring.

Confirmation

The final, but not terminal, stage in the time-ordered sequence of the adoption-of-innovation process is confirmation. At this stage individuals are seeking reinforcement for the decision that has been made, searching still for additional information. Individuals also want to avoid or reduce dissonance at this stage. Dissonance produces an uncomfortable state of mind. Rogers (2003) indicated that dissonance can sometimes be resolved by securing more knowledge about the innovation. The decision to implement RTI at the district or campus level warrants thoughtful consideration and strategic planning of how to integrate

the RTI framework into daily practices with benefits to learners. This type of thoughtfulness and strategic planning is seen in respondent statements:

1. "We have a 3-tier system established. We have a core RTI team. This is our 4th year of full-implementation and it is a constant changing system created to help all children succeed."
2. "Collaboration of parents, teachers, counselors, and administration to help students that are potential falling through the educational gaps provided by educational institutions."
3. "Our district is educating every teacher about RTI. We are using it all of our school(s). Every school has weekly RTI meetings. We have an RTI director for the district."

Another respondent commented,

> RTI has been implemented in our schools over the last three years and has allowed us to better focus on students needing more or additional academic support. We discuss our school wide plans at team meetings and have professional development during our staff meetings and workshops to better inform instruction w[ith] staff. We use Aimsweb and NWEA's [Northwest Evaluation Association] as well as local assessments to help determine students needs so we can better implement RTI.

Timeframe of Adoption

The innovation-decision period is the length of time needed for an individual or an organization to pass through. Rogers (2003) suggested that this time period is commonly considered to be from when knowledge of the innovation was learned to the time of confirmation.

Research has extensively investigated the success of agricultural extension services model.

> This model consists of three components: (1) a research subsystem, consisting of professors of agriculture supported by the fifty state agricultural experiment stations and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, (2) county extension agents who work as change agents with farmers and rural people at the local level and (3) state extension specialists who link agricultural researchers to the county agents. This model is an integrated system for the innovation-development process. (Rogers, 2003, p. 165)

This "extension service" model is typically not operational in education contexts. Therefore, one could hypothesize that the adoption of RTI may move more slowly and with hesitations at the various stages of adoption of innovation. These different timeframes of adoption may place individual and systems into distinct and different adopter categories.

Adopter Categories

As noted earlier, individuals in a system such as a school district or campus do not adopt an innovation like RTI at the same time but instead go through the adoption process in a time sequence. Adopters are classified "based upon the relative time at which an innovation is adopted" (Rogers, 2003, p. 22). Figure 6 shows the normal frequency distribution divided into the five adopter categories and the percentage of individuals included in each category, according to Rogers (2003). *Innovativeness*, "the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier is adopting new ideas other than other members of a social system" (Rogers, 2003, p. 280), is the criterion for categorizing adopters.

Innovativeness is a continuous variable with no breaks or chasms between adopter categories.

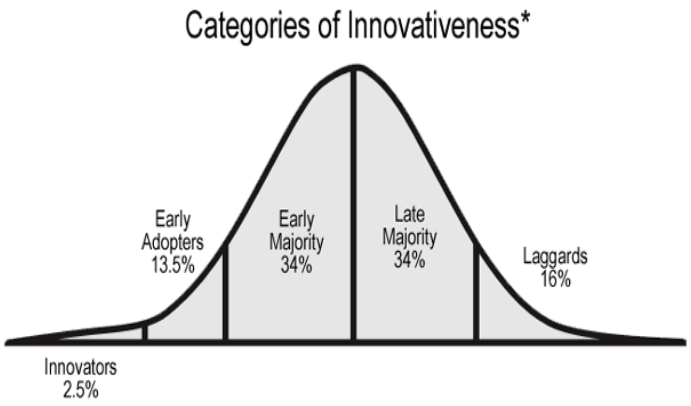

Figure 6. Adopter categorization on the basis of innovativeness. From *Diffusion of Innovations* (4th ed.), by E. M. Rogers, 1995, New York, NY: The Free Press.

Rogers (2003) noted a series of generalizations regarding adopter categories under three headings: (a) socioeconomic status, (b) personality values, and (c) communication behavior.

1. There is no difference in age between early adopters and late adopters in a social system, but early adopters have more formal education and generally have a higher socioeconomic status than do later adopters.
2. Early adopters in a system tend to be more empathetic, more rational, more adaptable with change, and better able to cope with uncertainty and risk.

3. Early adopters are more socially connected to the interpersonal networks of their systems, engage in information-seeking activities, and are more knowledgeable about innovations.

Diffusion information helps explain two important issues related to the adoption and implementation of RTI: (a) the reason some schools or districts are implementing RTI and others are not and (b) the reason some schools or districts are in the beginning stages in implementing RTI, whereas other schools or districts have been implementing RTI for more than 2 or 3 years. For example, campuses with risk takers, *innovators*, are reflected in educators' statements describing their programs and processes as models for others. Innovators are considered venturesome in the social system and would be the first to launch RTI into the organization, establishing processes that can become a standard for others to emulate. This phenomenon is demonstrated in the following educator statement:

> Each building has an active team ideally with representation from each grade level or department. We have developed a district standard set of documents that are accessible through our student records network. Gen. Ed. teachers select students who are not experiencing success in their classroom and initiate the process. The teacher is then supported through the process by members of the RTI team. Most of the buildings call this team the SST or Student Success Team. There is a widely varying level of understanding among teachers with respect to RTI, its purpose and how it functions. Overall however, it has been a critical part of helping teachers narrow their focus on meeting individual needs of every student.

Another educator stated that his or her elementary school "has been recognized by the State Department for their RTI process."

The *early adopter* reflects a successful installation of the innovation. There were statements reflecting this success: "Implemented in 2006, service Kdg-8th grade students, screen students for reading fluency/math fluency/writing" and "We are in our 6th year of implementation for ELA and our third year for math." Such acceptance and use of the innovation by a small number of adopters provide the assurances and pathways needed for later adopters. These early adopters provide the example needed to know that the installation is neither unique to a particular context nor possible only in a narrow circumstance. So to speak, "if 13% or so of schools are using RTI, so can we."

The *early majority,* according to Rogers (2003), has a relatively longer adoption process than the early adopters. Those in the early majority are willing to adopt and utilize the innovation but were not the first to implement RTI. Comments of the early majority included, "We have had a full time RtI Program in my building for 2 years, It is very effective." Statements reflecting the acceptance of the innovation are seen in *early majority adopters* were, "We are in our third year of implementing RTI district wide" and "Has been in place for a couple of years."

Skeptical is how Rogers (2003) would describe the *late majority* category. Educators who fall into this category have been reluctant to implement RTI,

perhaps due to financial and personnel constraints or a lack of a perceived need to change existent practice. Such adopters may want to see RTI processes and programs produce effectiveness outcomes before adoption or perhaps need to have policy prescribed externally. Educators in the late majority category are evidenced in the following comments: "RTI is in the formative stage," "Implemented this year at all elementary buildings," and "We are beginning this year."

The last adopter category is that of the *laggards.* Educators in this category are the last to adopt or to recognize that the innovation is becoming the standard of practice. Perhaps their organization is limited in resources or they are philosophically opposed to changing practice. They may be suspicious of reasons for the innovation or change and communicate that they do not plan to use the innovation. Laggards' perceptions towards RTI are exemplified by these statements: "In my district it does not exist," "Not currently implemented," "Being built," and "We use the Discrepancy model."

An interesting irony regarding innovativeness is what Rogers (2003) defined as the needs paradox and strategy of least resistance. Simply put, individuals or those who will benefit the most from an innovation are most likely to be the last to adopt an innovation. Those who adopt an innovation first often need the benefits the least. Given this paradox, districts and schools not implementing RTI may have students with the greatest need for a well-designed

and structured RTI framework that would provide early interventions for struggling students, frequent monitoring of student progress, and increased intensity and duration of research-based interventions.

Change

"Change cannot be managed. It can be understood and perhaps led, but it cannot be controlled" (Fullan, 2001, p. 33). Fullan's (2001) thoughts regarding change may help educators understand what is observed as schools try to install conceptions and procedures of RTI. Will this change be helpful in determining the existence of a specific LD and determine the eligibility for special education services? Will there be a paradigm shift from the traditional model of IQ versus achievement discrepancy? Such a shift would reshape historic practices or experiences with procedures and suggests a need for information and training.

For example, several educators posited that a lack of knowledge or training was the cause for the lack of implementation of RTI. Specifically, these comments included, "We are currently being trained to implement RTI," "Our district has undergone initial introductory training only," and "One in-service day was dedicated to an introduction to RTI."

Along with needed training, implementing an RTI framework raises questions of responsibility and changes in role. Comments related to new and different roles were reported by respondents and reflected this confusion or reluctance to assume responsibility: "We are still working on it. I am doing

progress monitoring and trying to help regular education teachers." Another noted, "It is used in our Special Ed department." Another respondent commented,

> In high school, haven't seen it at work yet. We have a new student that RTI needs to be used and instead of the Regular Teacher being involved, of course, they want EC [Early Childhood] personnel to do the work the Regular Teacher is suppose to do.

Hall and Hord (2006) noted, "Learning is the basis of and corollary to change . . . and formal training and other forms of staff and personal development are essential to prepare implementers for the change" (p. 191). Where RTI is being implemented for the first time or is in its infancy stages, school leaders need to consider the content, means, and procedures that will be required for installation of RTI. Where will there be issues or constraints, and how can those be addressed? For example, these areas might include the change to a tiered-intervention framework: teaching the skills necessary to correctly implement the components of a RTI framework, developing positive attitudes towards RTI, using the philosophy of research-based interventions, monitoring student progress, and making instruments and procedures available to accurately monitor student progress. Can the system become less reliant on the traditional testing methods of IQ and achievement, and will other information provide the decision data needed to the IQ discrepancy data? Clarifying misconceptions or misunderstandings and providing training for use are critical to the change process (Hall & Hord, 2006).

Misconceptions and misunderstandings held by educators about RTI are clearly indicated in the educator responses. For example, in the survey, respondents were asked, "RTI is used to identify students in need of special education services for what disability categories?" and 56.4% of respondents claimed RTI is appropriate to identify students having emotional disturbances, 58.4% claimed developmental delay could be identified through the RTI process, and 45.7% indicated that autism could be diagnosed through RTI. In addition, 30.4% believed that the school guidance counselor is responsible for implementing the interventions, and 45.8% agreed it is campus administration's responsibility to select the interventions to be utilized. To bring adoption and change to the educational organization and to manage misconceptions and misunderstandings regarding RTI, quality professional development that articulates the vision of the change is essential for successful acceptance and installation of the RTI innovation. The large variances in types and sizes of schools and districts, the changing of professional personnel, and the sensitivities of educational organizations to political influence further complicate the implementation of such a model. These educational organization characteristics speak to the significant necessity of the strengthening strategic planning, extensive and continuous training and clear leadership vision and action for RTI to become an installed operating innovation that changes the face of practice in schools.

The political climate that educational organizations are contending with is exemplified in the respondent statement " prevention from labeling as special ed." RTI for many institutions has become the means and method for deterring the identification of students to receive special education services. As one respondent characterized RTI, it is a "classroom to help struggling students." Until the phenomenon of what Rogers (2003) described as *routinization* occurs, whereby the innovation is incorporated into the daily practices and routines of the system, it will be treated as a separate entity. Once this *routinizing* occurs, sustainability, according to Rogers, will be allowed to ensue. The sustainability of an innovation such as RTI depends greatly on system members designing, discussing, and participating in the multiple components required for its implementation.

Conclusions

The reauthorization of IDEIA (2004) allowed LEAs to use RTI as part of the evaluation procedure for identifying students with specific LDs. This act, according to Knotek (2007), has "opened the door for the general education system to revisit how it assesses and provides service for students who are experiencing academic and behavioral difficulties" (p. 53). Since this door has opened, educators have faced new and unique challenges as instructors and leaders. An RTI framework that allows stakeholders responsible for improved student learner outcomes and the identification of students with specific LDs to be

accurately identified and instructed is the criteria for successful implementation of RTI.

This study confirms educators perceive many challenges with implementing RTI noted by other researchers (Swanson, Solis, Ciullo, & McKenna, 2012). Along with the challenges brought on by RTI, teachers perceive benefits to RTI. These benefits include students having interventions earlier, unique or diverse student needs able to be met, and teachers having the ability to collaborate with colleagues (Swanson et al., 2012).

"As a system of prevention and intervention, improvement in achievement for all students within a school system represents one of the most important potential outcomes associated with RTI" (Gischar, Hilt-Panahan, Clemens, & Shapiro, 2011). Providing educators with factual knowledge about RTI is critical in how successful RTI will be in a district or on a campus. The professional development models used to train those directly or indirectly involved in RTI must include training in research-based practices and be embedded in a systems-change perspective (Kratochwill, Volpiansky, Clements, & Ball, 2007).

At this time, RTI research is still incomplete and evolving, requiring criteria, efficacy, and procedures. As discussed by Barnett et al. (2007),

> Many types of research are needed to support RTI, not only large scale and single-case intervention research, but also research addressing measurement, selection, progress monitoring, and outcome evaluation. All of these involve complex decision processes and vulnerabilities to inaccurate decision-making. (p. 114)

As discussed earlier, schools as organizations are loosely coupled systems. The relationship of the national policy regarding RTI and the structure of how it affects state and local policies is illustrated in Figure 7. Appreciating that RTI is a multifaceted, complex framework, requiring coordination and integration into the school culture is essential for its potential benefits to be recognized. Rogers (2003) conceptualizations help us understand this complex system.

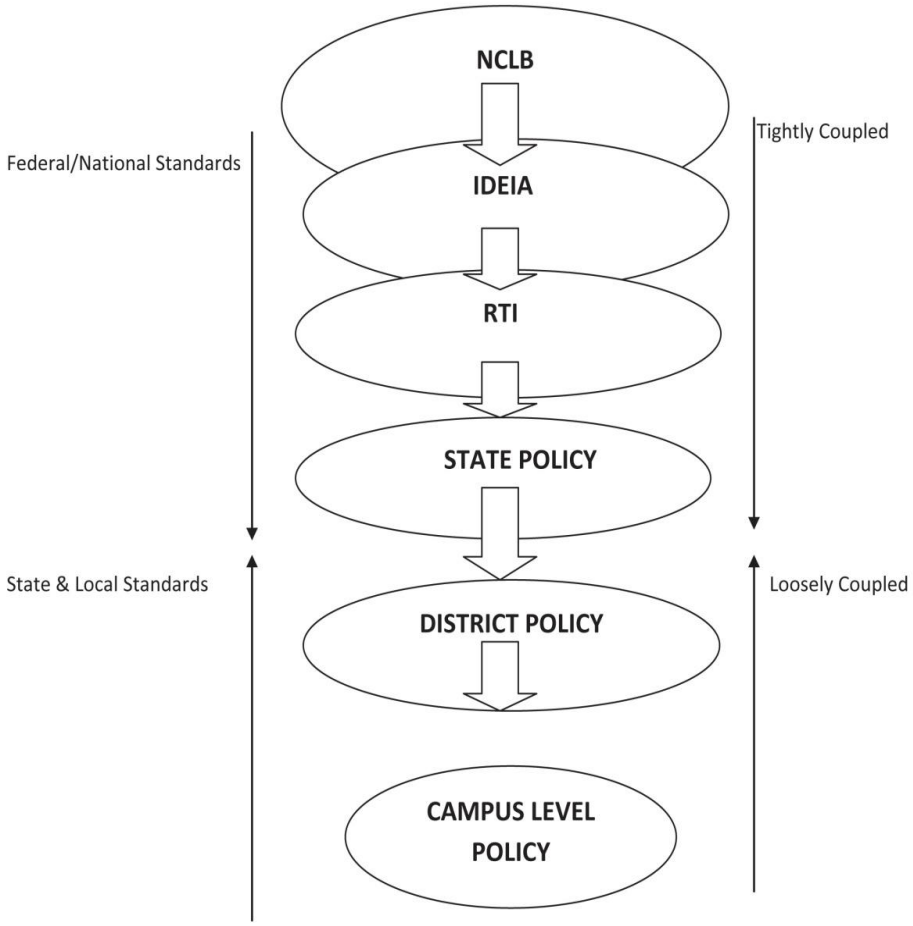

Figure 7. Illustration of government to local systems. NCLB = No Child Left Behind Act; IDEIA = Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act; RTI = Response to Innovation.

The changes and consequent ramifications to schools and districts because of these policies have affected general educators, special educators, administrators, and students.

Major conclusions that emerged from the study's findings include the following:

1. Observability or transparency in practices during the transition to RTI from the traditional model of IQ test versus achievement discrepancy is essential for all stakeholders.
2. The philosophy of early intervention service delivery and early LD identification that an RTI framework offers is a commonly held value among educators.
3. Educators need to be accurately informed as to the intention of RTI so they can understand the advantages and benefits of implementing an RTI framework to both instructors and students.
4. Educators still hold misconceptions and misperceptions about RTI despite 8 years after the reauthorization of IDEIA (2004).
5. Educators require professional development in models of multitiered prevention, intervention, and LD identification.

These conclusions appear to have specific implications to (a) the reauthorization of IDEIA (2004), (b) responsive educational leadership that is knowledgeable in addressing systemic change, and (c) educators meeting the requirements of the letter and spirit of IDEIA.

IDEIA 2004. Findings of the study call for careful consideration of IDEIA allowing LEAs to use an RTI model to determine eligibility for an LD. Specifically, how the RTI framework is implemented within an educational organization should be considered, as the law only suggests applications of RTI, without stipulating specific guidelines and parameters. Jimerson et al. (2007) noted,

> There is a paucity of resources that synthesize essential knowledge regarding the conceptual and empirical underpinnings of RTI and actual implementation. In many ways, it appears that recent legislation and many RTI initiatives during the past decade serve as a catalyst for further efforts and future scholarship to advance understanding of the science and practice of assessment and intervention at school. (p. 7)

Survey respondents indicated that individual school districts and schools are initiating their own unique models of RTI and, consequently, their particular standard of what constitutes a LD. Although many agree that change is warranted in the process of identifying students as LD, and the alternative of RTI is supported through research, the data of the survey confirm many questions continue to remain unanswered. The adoption characteristic of observability was most frequently reoccurring characteristic and is an indication educators want

visibility in the RTI adoption process. Educational leaders need to be aware that the more transparent a system is in its RTI processes, the greater the likelihood the implementation will be a success.

Educational leadership addressing systemic change. "Relationships and organizational success are closely interrelated" (Fullan, 2001, p. 51). A major purpose of RTI is to cause systemic change and reform school processes, and educational leaders who want change and reform that will improve instruction and reduce special education referrals (Clemens, Shapiro,Hilt-Panahan, & Gischlar, 2011) will respect this process. Acknowledging the vital role all educators, both general and special education, contribute to the successful design and implementation of the RTI framework is essential to comprehensive change that impacts student learning. The study's data reflect that educators require more training in all aspects associated with RTI: (a) tiered instruction, (b) progress monitoring, (c) research-based interventions, and (d) LD identification. In many educational systems, RTI is only being implemented piecemeal, or on a limited scale, not campus or district wide.

> It is the responsibility of the educational leader to enhance the knowledge and skills of professionals in the organization, establishing common expectations of using those knowledge and skills and holding the pieces of the organization together in productive relationships with one another. (Elmore, 2000, p. 15)

Meeting requirements of IDEIA. NCLB (2002) and IDEIA (2004) called for increased accountability in U.S. schools. Along with this increased

accountability, IDEIA required that a student receive research-based, quality instruction prior to special education referrals (Kaiser, Rosenfeld, & Gravois, 2009). With this increased accountability and requirement for evidence-based instruction, education leaders now have to be cognizant of all the interrelated factors associated with adopting RTI. All stakeholders are held accountable for student outcomes and therefore need to be informed and knowledgeable about the core components and processes required in the RTI framework. Data from this study reflect the common misconceptions and misperceptions educators have regarding what is required in the RTI framework. According to Yell and Walker (2010), school district personnel must be able to do the following:

- Screen all general education students within a school to determine which students are at risk for developing significant academic or behavior problems
- Understand and be able to implement scientifically-based academic and behavioral programs
- Determine which students are failing to respond to the research based interventions
- Provide increasing intensity of research-base interventions to these students. (p. 130)

Although individual personnel require knowledge, skill, and talent in the implementation of RTI components, these abilities cannot be fragmented into multiple innovations. There must be what Newman (as cited in Fullan, 2001) called *program coherence*. Coherence occurs when an organization is integrated

with coordinated professional development focused on clear learning goals that are sustained over a long period of time (Fullan, 2001). Once an educational organization has a coherent, organized structure where all members are accurately informed, aware, and trained in the aspects of the RTI framework, the knowledge exists of what is needed for successful implementation.

Implications for Practice

The major conclusions of the study support the following practices:

- joint professional development for both general and special educators in what comprises the RTI framework;
- a recognition of wide variance in RTI adoption and practice
- ensuring transparency in practices, processes, and programs in transitioning to and implementing the RTI framework;
- communicating what the advantages and benefits of the RTI framework are to all stakeholders; and
- augmenting school administrators' knowledge in systemic reform and the impact of systemic reform on individual behavior.
- Recognition of demographic variance may reflect differences in RTI implementation.

As a note regarding the utilization of Rogers's (2003) adoption-of-innovation model in the implementation of RTI, potential users should understand that

although Rogers's theory is an established model in the social sciences, it is now newly applied to the implementation of RTI.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several areas for future research are supported by the findings of the study:

- General education and special education consensus on what defines LD in the RTI framework should be studied. An expert panel could study consensus building on federal criteria for LD eligibility.
- Designing a highly effective system-wide RTI framework is recommended. A comparative study between school districts could determine significant differences and commonalities in characteristics between leaders and instructors in implementing RTI processes and programs.
- Professional development requirements in the RTI framework could involve a Delphi study for consensus on the needed components for educators working in an organization where RTI is implemented.

A requirement in educational reform has many aspects. Complexities in resource allocation, intricacies with personnel, and meeting expected goals for improved student performance are just some of the pressures reform movements bring to the forefront. Educational leaders at the district and campus levels are responsible for overseeing the implementation of these reform movements and

ensuring all stakeholders are actively engaged in these reform movements. The mandates of IDEIA (2004) and RTI as a reform has caused both controversy and confusion. With continued dialogue, research, and problem solving, educators can work strategically together to meet the needs of all learners.

Appendix A: Survey Quantitative Data

Table A1

Number and Percentage of Respondents Aware of Response to Intervention (Survey Question 1)

Survey item	Category	Yes		No	
		n	%	*n*	%
1. Response to intervention (RTI) is being discussed nationally as a way to address the needs of struggling learners. Are you aware of RTI?	Observability	554	90.1	61	9.9

Note. $N = 615$; 12 respondents skipped the question.

Table A2

Survey Likert-Scale Items: Percentage of Responses

Survey item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
3. The law requires RTI.	10.6	13.1	29.3	33.8	13.1
5. RTI is culturally sensitive.	14.1	13.8	47.4	28.6	6.1
6. RTI is appropriate for English language learners.	3.9	5.0	28.2	48.5	14.4
10. I have participated in professional development related to RTI.	10.9	13.9	9.6	42.2	23.5

Note. RTI = response to intervention.

Table A3

Percentage of Respondents Identifying Disability Categories in Survey Question 4

4. RTI is used to identify students in need of special education services for what disability categories? Check all that apply.	%
Specific learning disability	91.6
Developmental delay	58.4
Emotional disturbance	56.4
Speech or language impairment	50.3
Multiple disabilities	49.0
Other health impaired	46.7
Autism	45.7
Mental retardation	45.2
Hearing impairment	34.2
Visual impairment	33.7
Traumatic brain injury	32.7
Orthopedic impairment	27.6
Deaf-blindness	27.0

Note. RTI = response to intervention.

Table A4

Percentage of Respondents Identifying Staff in Survey Question 7

7. Who determines a student's nonresponsiveness to academic learning in the RTI process in your school or district? Check all that apply.	%
General education teacher	72.3
Principal, assistant principal	57.8
Special education teacher	57.6
Intervention specialist	47.5
Guidance counselor	42.2
Diagnostician or assessment professional	32.4
Director of special education	31.5
Other	20.3
Don't know	10.3
LSSP	7.8

Note. RTI = response to intervention; LSSP = Licensed Specialist in School Psychology.

Table A5

Percentage of Respondents Identifying Staff in Survey Question 8

8. Who implements RTI in your school or district? Check all that apply.	%
General education teacher	70.7
Special education teacher	53.4
Intervention specialist	44.8
Principal, assistant principal	43.7
Guidance counselor	30.4
Director of special education	21.1
Diagnostician or assessment professional	16.6
Other	13.3
Don't know	9.8

Note. RTI = response to intervention.

Table A6

Percentage of Respondents Identifying Staff in Survey Question 9

9. Who selects the specific interventions for the RTI process in your school or district?	%
General education teacher	62.8
Special education teacher	51.1
Principal, assistant principal	45.8
Intervention specialist	43.6
Guidance counselor	29.0
Director or supervisor of special education	24.1
Diagnostician or assessment professional	23.2
Other	17.3
Don't know	13.5

Note. RTI = response to intervention.

Appendix B: Panel Member Document

Purpose/Description of Study

This study seeks to use Rogers's (2003) conceptions of adoption of innovation and other organizational theory to explore whether these theoretical conceptions can help explain, and forecast the ways practitioners in educational organizations implement RTI. Rogers described "an innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (p. 12). Rogers explained it is through the innovation decision process that an individual or a system over time determines if the new idea is going to be implemented and adopted as ongoing practice. This study is investigating the following questions: (1) Do Rogers's characteristics of innovations and sequence of adoption forecast RTI implementation in educational organizations? (2) Does Rogers' adoption-of-innovation model explain the variances in implementation of RTI in school organizations?

Utilizing Rogers's five determining characteristics of the rate of adoption of an innovation, along with his five adopter categories, participant responses are to be coded and categorized into the corresponding adoption trait and category. Definitions and descriptions of the adoption characteristics and categories are provided below:

The five determining characteristics of the rate of adoption of an innovation are: (a) relative advantage, (b) compatibility, (c) complexity, (d) trialability, and (e) observability.

Relative advantage (RA) "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes" (Rogers, 2003, p. 15). Measurement can be in both economic terms and social prestige status. The most pertinent factor of this characteristic is how advantageous does the individual think an innovation will be.

Compatibility (CO) "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters" (Rogers, 2003, p. 15). An innovation or idea that is incongruent with the values, norms, and practices of a social system is likely to have a slower adoption rate.

Complexity (CX) "is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being difficult to understand and use" (Rogers, 2003, p. 16). Innovations that are easier to comprehend and utilize have a faster adoption rate than those innovations that are more complicated and require the attainment of new skills and learning.

Trialability (T) "is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis" (Rogers, 2003, p. 16). Novel ideas that can be implemented in pieces or on a small scale enjoy more rapid adoption versus new ideas that require full implementation.

Observability (OB) "is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others" (Rogers, 2003, p. 16). The more transparent the results of the innovation are to individuals, the greater the likelihood of adoption of the innovation. Transparency promotes discussion, thereby creating a desire for more information about the innovation.

Directions:
Please code on the accompanying spreadsheet the adoption characteristic and category ***you*** believe best describes the participant response. A numeric scale ranging from 0-4 is indicated under each adoption characteristic.

Numeric Scale: 0 = *Not Applicable;* 1 = *Low;* 2 = *Medium Low;* 3 = *Medium High;* 4 = *High*

Note: It may be appropriate for some responses to have more than one adoption characteristic recognized. If this occurs, please indicate each trait in the corresponding box.

Appendix C: Survey Aggregate Data, Ratings by Adoption Category

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
1	All four of my school assigned to me are active	0	4	0	0	0
2	Moving in that direction	3	0	0	0	0
3	We are using the RTI process to address literacy only at this (not math or behavior).	0	0	0	4	0
4	our district has not begun using response to intervention	0	1	0	0	0
5	We utilize school wide national assessments at the beginning and end year to measure progress and identify students with gaps. Some students are referred to IAT and then after a process could be referred for spec ed services. However, our school district does lack remediation between the IAT and assessment process.	0	3	0	0	3
6	Students are grouped to better serve each student	4	0	0	0	0
7	We have not implemented it.	0	1	0	0	0
8	We have casa groups to discuss the progress of individual students in classes and to decide who needs extra tutoring, etc.	0	0	0	0	4
9	We use RTI prior to special education referral	0	4	0	0	0
10	RTI words fairly well in our district in the primary grades at least. I am frustrated that it can take so long to get special help (other then what can be done in the regular classroom) for children that are struggling. Especially if the teacher before has not done the paper work necessary so that the current teacher doesn't have to start from the beginning.	2	2	3	0	0
11	assess how students respond to intervention measures that are instituted in order for them access the curriculum...	0	2	0	0	3
12	Staff is required to use it at the elementary levels	0	0	0	0	0
13	It is currently be implemented at one elementary school as a pilot project.	0	0	0	4	3
14	Intermediate Stages	0	0	2	0	0
15	It is often responsibility of regular classroom teacher. If problems still exist, meet with team	0	3	0	0	0
16	CBI used to assess testing	0	3	0	0	0
17	It is a 30 min block of time to work with students on reading fluency. Each school has a different plan, depending on their individual needs. We have some grade levels doing flex grouping, and some pull out	0	0	4	0	0
18	little to speak of	0	0	0	0	0
19	It is used in the elementary grades to intervene prior to IEP testing.	0	0	0	4	0
20	We are in the beginning stages. Learning the process and implementing it.	0	0	0	3	0

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
21	We are in the process as a district in modifying our current IAT process to fit the RTI model	0	2	0	0	0
22	If a child is having acadeic or behavior issue he or she is entered into the RTI	0	2	0	0	0
23	I started RTI last year through organizing Elem Principals and Curriculum person.	0	0	0	3	0
24	RTI is its beginning stages at the school district.	0	0	0	1	0
25	not being used	0	1	0	0	0
26	We have just started the our RTI program. Therefore, I do not have enough information to answer all the questions listed below.	0	0	0	0	1
27	We use a universal screener to evaluate where are students are in Language Arts and Math.	0	2	0	4	0
28	RTI is fully implemented. We have Tier II and Tier III interventions in K-5. Our strategies are research based.	0	4	0	4	0
29	We've been at it for more than two years. It is fully or almost fully implmented in each of our schools.	0	4	0	3	0
30	It is the process we use for struggling students.	0	4	0	0	0
31	Small Rural with a student enrollment of 350	0	0	0	0	0
32	RtI is impletmented K-12 to identify students in need of supplmental supports and services. It is also used as part of the optional criteria for some SpEd eligibilities.	4	4	0	0	0
33	RTI has a system of three tiers - depending on the needs of the individual students	0	0	0	0	2
34	we are getting it started	0	1	0	0	0
35	We use a Tier Model. We are currently using it for reading.	0	4	0	4	0
36	it does not work	1	0	0	0	0
37	Interventions are tried before referrals are made	3	3	0	0	0
38	I am not involved in RTI but am very familiar with it.	0	0	0	0	0
39	We usse RTI to guide our Data driven curriculum and to assit those students who are struggling.	0	0	0	0	0
40	the right to intervention gives students who are struggling some extra help	4	0	0	0	0
41	We have a primary team & secondary team that meets once per month or more often.	0	0	0	2	0
42	Our school is knowledgable, and has tiers of interventions in place	0	0	0	0	0
43	We are in our 3rd year of implementation and at this time an RtI team looks a benchmark data 3 times a year and assists the classroom teachers into making decisions to help improve student achievement.	0	0	0	0	0

	Response to “Tell us about RTI in your school or district”	RA	CO	CX	T	O
44	Processes are in place as needed	0	0	0	2	0
45	Just getting started and identifing what we already do and how it can fit into the federal initiative	4	0	0	0	0
46	Implemented at Elementary School with reading	0	0	0	3	0
47	At risk students are presented with multiple strategies and interventions designed through the use of quality assessments and data collections and consistently monitored for improvement. Changes are made to the interventions if the RTI team believes additional achievements can be made.	0	0	0	0	4
48	In my district it does not exist.	0	0	0	0	0
49	we have AR in the high school reading strategies are applied in all classrooms	0	0	0	1	0
50	Through data analysis and teacher observation when we determine that a student is exhibiting "red flags" which are interfering with a students academic or behavioral progress a team meets to discuss the student and determine the most effective method or providing support to assist the student.	0	0	0	3	1
51	We are in our 6th year of implementation for ELA and our third year for math	0	0	0	0	4
52	We use the Discrepancy model	0	0	0	0	0
53	We utilize Aimsweb and Discovery and provide additional assistance depending on which Tier the child tests.	0	0	0	0	2
54	We montior students who are at risk, provide intervention for them and monitor their progresss. If the student needs more than the given intervention, we consider other services such as special education.	0	0	0	3	0
55	We are not using the process in our building.	0	0	0	0	0
56	Being rolled out	0	0	0	1	0
57	Just put it in place this school year	0	0	0	2	0
58	We have an intervention study hall for ALL students who have zeroes or submit incomplete or inferior work.	0	0	0	0	0
59	RTI is currently being implemented and is very similar to BBSST.	0	0	0	0	0
60	Reading and Math interventions using data to determine student needs	0	0	0	0	0
61	On target for students that qualify	0	0	0	0	0
62	We are more involved in PBiS or positive behavior support	0	0	0	0	0
63	We are creating the structure at the county and the frameworks for each school. Teams, Process, Documentation, Support for Instruction, Tiered Intervention Ideas, Collaboration…	0	0	0	0	0

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
64	Response to Intervention is a district-wide initiative on academic intervention strategies.	0	0	0	0	4
65	RTI has been adopted and this is the first year we will be using it to assist students to help them be successful learners	2	0	0	0	0
66	Process is just beginning. Whole school screening and monitoring for reading and math are in place.	0	0	0	1	3
67	RtI is used to determine eligibility of Learning Disabled students and placement into Intervention CLasses.	0	0	0	0	1
68	Well defined, closely followed grades K-5, less well defined at the secondary level, but it is an area of current focus.	0	0	0	3	2
69	We are providing Tier 1, 2, and 3 interventions. Teachers meet on a regular basis to try to determine how best to meet the needs of each child before a special education referral can be made	0	0	0	0	3
70	I feel we are behind, I feel that we are unclear on what to do at the high school level and what interventions are successful with secondary students/teachers.	0	0	4	1	0
71	workshops and after school instruction to help students	0	0	0	0	0
72	programs that address the individual student needs...					
73	We are presently researching the best practices for an effective RTI model.	0	3	0	0	0
74	RTI is very present in our school. We have programs set up to intervene on our tier three children. We also set up tutorials for our tier two students. Finally, we have a special time set aside to aid those who may just need a little extra help for tier one.	4	0	0	0	4
75	first year of implementation through OrRTI	0	0	0	2	2
76	implemented in 2006, service Kdg-8th grade students, screen students for reading fluency/math fluency/writing	0	3	0	0	4
77	All students begin in Tier 1 - Quality Classroom Instruction. Students struggling have a Tier 1 plan developed using the Research-Based Instructional Strategies identified by Robert Marzano. Tier 2 is 30 minutes of additional instruction per day using activities from Intervention Central, Florida Center for Reading Research, HeadSprout, FastForWord, My Reading Coach, Read 180, etc. Students unresponsive receive one hour of additional instruction and daily progress monitoring via AIMSweb.	0	0	0	0	4

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
78	Response to intervention is done here at school. The teacher meets with the students parents to discuss the learning/behavior issues and together they plan for intervention. Teacher monitors student progress over the next 6 to 8 weeks. If progress is made cycle stops there. If there is no respone, a second parent meeting is held and team discusses the strenghts a weaknesses of the first interventions, adjustments are made and then teacher monitiors progress. If now progress is made, the team starts the elgilibility cycle.	0	0	0	0	4
79	We are in the process of developing our RTI program	4	0	0	0	0
80	We use this strategy for lower elementary students and still expanding, but do not currently identify SPED students via this method exclusively.	0	2	0	4	0
81	A 3 teired process	0	0	0	0	2
82	We document the interventions/strategies that teachers use in the classroom and through our Reading Intervention program. This data is used to help determine if additional, specialized testing is needed to determine the specific instructional strategies a student may need to be successful in school.	0	0	0	0	4
83	It is being utilized (but under a different name) by various degrees at several schools (mostly elementary), but not district-wide! It depends on which teachers and/or support staff have been trained.	0	2	4	0	0
84	Intervention data are plotted on computerized charts for students experiencing difficulty with reading, math, written language, or study skills. If the line does not move after 3 data points, a change line is drawn and a new intervention or an adjustment to the old intervention is implemented. This continues until the problem is solved or it is determined that the child needs to be referred for Special Education.	0	0	0	0	4
85	We have a pull out program where students who have been tested and are in need of additional help receive 30 minutes of additional instruction per day in a small group .	0	0	3	0	2
86	not fully implemented	0	0	4	0	0
87	We have a second chance reading type chasses available and have just started a math class for gen ed junior high students struggling with math. The general math class at the high school is also for struggling students.	0	0	3	0	2
88	We have meetings twice a month to discuss various interventions and how they are working for out students.	4	0	0	1	0
89	Not doing it well just discussion and some progress monitoring	0	0	4	0	1
90	We have fully implemented RTI in our school, K through 3rd. We also specialize with students in Grades 4 & 5, but not to the degree that we do in the lower grades.	0	0	2	0	3

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
91	We currently have several RTI strategies in place in our classrooms, as well as a 30 minute block at the end of each day dedicated to Enrichment and Intervention.	0	0	0	0	4
92	We are in the initial stages. We are just engaging in initial planning for implementation at the central office level. However, there are initiatives in the district that are consistent with and can be incorporated into RTI.	4	2	0	0	0
93	We are beginning to implement the different levels of tiers.	0	0	0	3	0
94	RTI has been implemented in our schools over the last three years and has allowed us to better focus on students needing more or additional academic support. We discuss our school wide plans at a-team meetings and have professional development during our staff meetings and workshops to better inform instruction w staff. We use Aimsweb and NWEA's as well as local assessments to help determine students needs so we can better implement RTI	0	3	0	0	4
95	Response to Intervention uses a three tier model to differentiate learning for struggling education students.	0	0	0	0	2
96	We are in the beginning stages of RTI. All schools in the district have begun implementation of RTI. At the elementary level this usually consists of a block of time (approx 30 min.) that is used for the tier 3 students. The focus has been on reading thus far.	0	0	2	0	3
97	We do individual evaluation, and teacher on student level working toward grade level. This is just being implemented in our school	0	0	0	3	1
98	Have had some training. Implementation through special education	2	0	2	0	0
99	Our elementary school has established a process for RTI. Our high school has a much more informal process of providing intervention to students in need. They are able to receive assistance from either the Vocational Resource Educator or myself.	0	3	0	0	2
100	We are in the process of developing a model that aligns with RTI. We have several reading interventions in place for tier 2 and tier 3 students. We are just starting to develop a plan for math. We have intervention groups in place for tier 2, but very little for tier 3 in math.	3	0	0	0	0
101	one inservice day was dedicated to an introduction to RTI	0	0	4	0	0
102	Used at early childhood, elementary, middle and high school levels	0	0	0	0	2
103	This district has embraced RTI to its fullest. We still have areas to work on.	0	0	3	0	0
104	I work at two buildings and RTI looks very different at each building. At one building students are sent through a strict process with an abundant amount of paperwork to get through the tiers of RTI. The other school goes through the tiers of RTI but also realizes that some students come in very severe and needed to be rushed through the process.	0	0	3	0	2

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
105	Multiple opportunities for reinforcement, Tier 1, 2 and 3, Before school and after school target programs, Instructional support teams/ review individual cases, staff development for reaching diverse learners, MCAS analysis teams, Performance Improvement Mapping	0	0	0	0	4
106	I use it as a means to assess interventions being implemented for reading. We have an on-going assessment schedule with progress monitoring so we can gauge the effectivness of the instruction and adjust accordingly	0	0	0	0	3
107	Some implementation primarily at elementary school levels and preschool, including problem-solving teams. Primarily focuesed on reading, but also attempting to implement in reading and also behavior.	0	0	3	0	2
108	too complex for this space and time	0	0	4	0	0
109	We have started doing some universal screening at the elementary level in math. We have student intervention teams that meet when a teacher request one.	3	0	0	2	0
110	IDM model is used at the elementary and middle school levels. Students are identified and interventions are performed in the gen. ed. classroms and in pull out groups. At the high school level, the BAT team (sp. ed. and At Risk teachers are members) helps to identify students in need of intervention, and then the interventions are performed either in the Developmental Reading classes or in the At Risk setting. Students who do not respond to these interventions are referred to the AEA team for further testing and possible special ed. services.At the high school level, the BAT team (sp. ed. and At Risk teachers are members) helps to identify students in need of intervention, and then the interventions are performed either in the Developmental Reading classes or in the At Risk setting. Students who do not respond to these interventions are referred to the AEA team for further testing and possible special ed. services. At the high school level, the BAT team (sp. ed. and At Risk teachers are members) helps to identify students in need of intervention, and then the interventions are performed either in the Developmental Reading classes or in the At Risk setting. Students who do not respond to these interventions are referred to the AEA team for further testing and possible special ed. services.	0	0	0	0	4
111	We are in different stages of implementing a three tiered intervention approach preK-12 in reading, math and behavior across the district. Positive behavior intervention system (PBIS) has been very effective, as well as programs and strategies to address literacy needs.	0	0	3	0	2
112	It is just starting to be considered	4	0	0	0	0

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
113	We use RTI in coordination with our intervention assistance team, team meetings and referral process.	0	4	0	0	0
114	We have not started implementing RTI yet.	0	0	0	0	0
115	We use it in conjunction with behavior plans.	0	4	0	0	0
116	If a child is struggling, the classroom teacher brings their concerns to a committee of teachers and special education staff. They suggest accommodations to use in your classroom. 6-8 weeks later, you meet with the committee again to discuss the results. If the accommodations have not worked, the student is tested by a number of special education staff members who determine if the student needs to be placed on an iep or not.	0	0	0	4	0
117	Still new, but well on our way in reading, weak for math, in the middle for behavior support - though we have started PBS	0	0	0	4	1
118	Teachers are available for extra services	0	0	0	2	0
119	I know very little about its use in our district.	0	0	0	0	0
120	As the RtI legislation in Wisconsin was just recently passed, we are in the beginning stages of implementation. We have universal screening in place and some tier 2 interventions. We are developing our progress monitoring tools. We have PBIS implemented in all of our elementary buildings.	0	0	0	4	2
121	We have Grade Level team meetings to discuss student progress, we have implemented a reading intervention and are beginning to start a math intervention for students. We assist with accommodations for all students. We have also attempted a review of our core curriculum and tried to address areas of need.	0	0	0	4	2
122	It is used as a basis for referral of students in any compensatory program, but not formally adopted.	0	0	0	3	0
123	Using AIMSweb to group students based upon three different assessment measures. Progress monitoring lowest 50 students at each grade level to verify interventions. Using numerous research-based interventions.	0	0	0	0	3
124	Use a three tier system to help identify students needing intervention. Tier one being general supports in the classroom, tier two being direct intervention (usually taking an elective class and putting an additional reading or math intervention class).	0	0	0	0	4
125	RTI/SRBI is current implemented in all schools. We provide universal screenings, progress monitoring and Tier I, II and III interventions.	0	0	0	0	4
126	We look at data weekly and do progress monitoring on a daily/weekly basis.	0	0	0	0	3
127	A pyramid of interventions that vary based on the level of issue or behavior and based on the effectiveness with the student.	0	0	0	0	3

	Response to “Tell us about RTI in your school or district”	RA	CO	CX	T	O
128	In my school, RTI is initiated by the teacher when they have a concern either academic or behavioral about a student. The teacher must have made prior contact with the parents about the concern. There are many forms and documents to fill out and records to review. The teacher meets with the RTI team and an intervention plan is created. Intervention must then be documented for at least 21 separate events, noting progress related to which activities. After 21 events the intervention plan is reviewed. If it is a success then continue documenting progress. If the first intervention plan is not working, a different intervention will be recommended and the second intervention plan will be put into action and documented for 21intervention sessions(events). If after 42 events there is not progress, the student does not respond to intervention and the teacher suspects there may be a Special Education need, then our instructional support will come in and do an observation. Based on all of the intervention documentation together with the observation there will be a meeting with the parent to determine if testing for Special education is needed.	0	0	4	0	0
129	RTI services are currently implemented for reading and math. There are 3 tiers of different levels of support.	0	0	0	1	3
130	Elementary level has RtI implemented in the school and is putting it to practice, MS/HS is just beginning the process	0	0	0	4	0
131	RtI is utilized in our K-4 elementary schools whereby we "flood" regular education classrooms with teachers whose specialties range from reading to Speech and Language to special needs to work with identified students in flexible groups. We target instruction to meet the needs of these students using a variety of interventions that match identified gaps. We then progress monitor through ongoing formative assessments and regroup as needed.	0	0	0	0	4
132	RTI is used to make sure we address the remedial needs of all students.	0	0	0	0	2
133	Elementary is well underway. MS/HS just getting started	0	0	0	4	2
134	We use RTI with struggling students.	0	0	0	2	0
135	we follow district guidelines	0	0	0	0	0
136	RTI is "in the works" for the lower grades-it has not been implemented in 8-12.	0	0	0	4	0
137	The district has provided professional development on RTI and is beginning to put the model in place.	0	0	0	4	0
138	We are just beginning it with the elementary school I work at. We are implementing a 4 week RTI process to acquire data on studnet progress.	0	0	0	4	0
139	Implemented at elementary and middle levels	0	0	0	0	3

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
140	we are still working on it. I am doing progress monitoring and trying to help regular education teachers.	0	0	0	3	0
141	Our RTI is called our Student Intervention Team (SIT) which all struggling learners go through before referral to Special Education.	0	0	0	0	2
142	Small suburb of NYC. 1500-2000 students throughout the district. 700 in the high school	0	0	0	0	0
143	Not used yet	0	0	0	0	0
144	A team meets to discuss student concerns, determines a course of action to be implemented.	0	0	0	0	2
145	Strong RTI team. Made up of teachers from secondary and primary level.	0	0	0	0	4
146	used effectively to meet the needs of our students. lots of resources available for students, staff, parents.	0	0	0	0	4
147	Each building has an RTI process in place. Students are placed in the process due to academic struggles, identified, by parents, teachers or counselors. Interventions are suggested by team, implemented by the teacher, response is monitored, additional interventions if needed, measured. If no positive response after 2-3 rounds of interventions, testing may be completed.	0	0	0	0	4
148	3 tiered system that provides struggling system with a number of opportunities to meet their peers levels without automatically being referred for special education.	0	0	0	0	4
149	Different schools are at different phases of implementation - we have some fully RtI school and others taking steps towards it. My school is not fully RtI yet.	0	0	0	4	2
150	Just starting the discussions on implementation	0	0	0	0	0
151	We have an RTI group the meets weekly and we have built in intervention blocks everyday.	1	0	4	0	4
152	Classroom that helps struggling students	1	1	0	0	0
153	prevention from labeling as SpEd	0	0	0	0	0
154	Three plan implemented in district for grades k-8. SRBI facilitators just hired and will be trained to provide interventions	0	2	1	1	3
155	We do use RTI and discuss it frequently	0	2	0	0	4
156	We have implemented a program of instructional intervention for students who score minimal on the MCT Testing. We have intervention specialists who work with these students. Classroom teachers keep a notebook of interventions used, running records of progress made, plans for needed changes to the process.	0	3	0	0	4
157	WE are fully implemented with an interventionist at our school. I meet with teachers to discuss benchmark results and placement of interventions	3	4	0	0	4

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
158	We are using it at elementary, though apparently the state has just switched its procedures and due to lack of resources, we won't be able to take part in trainings offered this year.	0	1	0	4	2
159	We utilize the Tier process in our school. We have a Teacher Support Team and a school interventionist. We follow our state's guidelines for referring students and prescribing interventions to help remediate students at risk of failing.	2	4	0	0	4
160	used for K-3, implemented by child study team (reg. ed. teachers), needs improvement	0	2	0	3	1
161	We have had trainings on it and use it to help students.	0	1	0	0	1
162	Implemented District Wide	2	2	0	0	3
163	RTI is being done on a daily bases.	0	2	0	0	4
164	We have tiered intervention levels.	0	0	0	0	0
165	The District has an RTI plan and embraces the model.	0	0	0	0	0
166	Currently progressing	0	0	0	0	0
167	Not sure to this point. New in the district	0	0	0	0	0
168	As far as in the High School we are just beginning with RTI	0	0	0	0	1
169	CST developed and in place for the last five years. All reports are data driven Students are monitored for success of interventions	0	2	0	0	3
170	Not Sure at this time	0	0	0	0	0
171	District initiative	0	0	0	0	0
172	We have not developed a plan and are far from implementing anything effective.	0	0	0	0	0
173	0	0	0	0	0	0
174	We use a tiered intervention system, but not RTI as a system for qualifying students for special education services.	0	0	0	0	0
175	just starting to use it	0	0	0	0	0
176	As students are identified as having academic or behavioral limitations, interventions in general education are used to address the behaviors; achievement is monitored to see to what degree the child is responding to the intervention; data are used to make further educational decisions	0	0	0	0	0
177	We have been using the model for 4 years to help struggling kids	0	2	0	0	4
178	Did not work well in the beginning as it was seen as a way to get students into a program...another type of MDT. However, we are using data more effectively now and beginning to look at our own Tier 1 practices in classrooms. Instructional practices and differentiation are a primary focus at lower grades. However at secondary, there are still concerns.	0	0	3	0	4

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
179	Our state defines RtI as Response to Instruction. Our first focus is on Tier I (instruction meeting the needs of 80% of students the first time) Tier II (targeted instruction to meet the neds of at least 15% who didn't gain mastery during Tier I instruction) and Tier II (instruction to meet the needs of the remaining 5% of students. This instruction if often provided by an additional teacher and implementation of software or other programs to meet student needs.)	0	0	0	0	0
180	We are in Phase 2	0	0	0	0	0
181	We are in the second phase of establishing a district plan to ensure that a comprehensive, systematic approach to intervention is in place in all of our schools.	0	2	0	0	4
182	Students who are struggling receive intervention to help them improve their skills in the academic areas of reading, writing, math, social studies and science.	0	0	0	0	0
183	We are in the beginning stages of implementation. Some staff has had some training. Our new principal is trained and encouraging staff to get trained.	0	1	0	2	0
184	Have time built into school day to have extra time with students,	0	1	0	0	4
185	Just beginning	0	0	0	0	1
186	We currently have used the RTI system for two school years.	0	3	0	0	3
187	Very big push right now at the K-2 level	4	0	1	4	4
188	We monitor all students in math and reading through EasyCBM and state summative assessments and use the data on the team level for placement and added interventions.	0	1	0	3	4
189	We have remediation labs in reading and math for studnets behind grade level.	0	1	1	3	3
190	No official model but we provide additional time and support for struggling readers.	0	0	0	0	0
191	Currently designing lessons at all levels with 3 tiers of activity levels to meet standards; Lexia and Project Read at elementary level	2	3	1	2	3
192	A team of school professionals meet to identify at-risk students. Once students have been identified the team will look at target areas and make programming or intervention recommendations based on the target areas identified. If students continue to demonstrate difficulty in the areas targeted the team will look at more intensive interventions.	1	1	2	2	2
193	We have a tier system with a committee responsible for setting the level of intervention needed.	1	1	2	2	2

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
194	Our Elementary and Middle School use IDM. But we do not use it or RTI in the high school. There is a chance we will be moving that direction.	0	1	1	1	1
195	We recently completed an application for RTI Cohort School Division	0	0	0	0	0
196	2nd year	4	4	2	3	3
197	Adoptive stage	0	0	0	0	0
198	tier 2 and tier 3 at all levels for reading...tier 2 is a second class of reg ed small group reading, tier 3 is a 2nd class of reg ed small group reading and spec. ed. service for reading, tier 2 and 3 intervention for math at secondary level - tier 2 reg ed small group math (middle level on intense instruction on skills, high school based on current class - ie: 2nd geometry class, 2nd alge. class to preview skills) tier 3 is small group spec. ed	3	3	3	3	3
199	We have a team formed to begin RTI with serious understanding for all staff member this 2010-2011.	0	0	0	0	0
200	We have a tiered instruction model at the elementary level with a schedule of formal and informal assessments to progress monitor student performance. There are data teams that meet biweekly to review assessment data and alter instruction as appropriate. RTI at the secondary level is a work in progress.	1	2	2	3	2
201	We just got involved with this program.	1	1	1	1	1
202	Currently moving to this model.	0	0	0	0	0
203	Students in the bottom 10 percent of each class begin interventions.	1	1	0	1	1
204	They assist with the instruction and support of our higher need students	0	1	0	1	1
205	We use RTI in reading and math skills with struggling learners, very fluid grouping. We still need to implement behavior support.	2	1	3	3	2
206	We have many inclusion classes and individualized instruction for special needs students	0	1	3	1	1
207	It has been used for several years. We used it in our district K-12 mainly for remediation but we also try to use it proactively when it's possible.	4	4	1	4	4
208	Our district is educating every teacher about RTI. We are using it all of our school. Every school has weekly RTI meetings. We have an RTI director for the district.	3	4	1	4	4
209	TST/RTI A program developed by our Superintendent. Addresses any concerns that hinder the students success. (Academic or Behavior) and allows the Teachers and/or Administrators to create and write plans addressing those concerns.	0	0	0	0	0
210	We are currently being trained to implement RTI	1	2	0	0	0

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
211	We are in the beginning stages of RTI. We have a behavioral tier and an academic tier. We are currently gathering data to serve as our baseline. Intervention pyramids have been built and teachers are in the process of learning how to provide quality interventions to students and how to collect and analyze data.	1	1	0	1	1
212	We are beginning to implement RTI	1	1	0	1	1
213	Interventions and documentation in place K-6. No system in place for grades 7-12.	2	2	0	2	3
214	At the elemetary and middle school campuses, there are steps in place to ensure that students are correctly identified for the Special Education program. At secondary campuses, we continue the services provided to the student as well as ensuring that students are receiving the correct placement opportunities.	0	2	0	2	3
215	RTI is actively used in grades 3-8 and is coordinated by a professional staff member.	2	2	2	3	4
216	We have RtII for 4 years in our Elementary School. We are working to complete the rubric for our state. Last year we started Reading RtII at Middle School and this year RtII for Math. RtII training for both Middle School and High School is starting this year.	4	4	2	3	4
217	They have begun the process at the elementary level. It have not been implemented at the middle school or high school level.	1	2	0	2	2
218	It is implemented through the student intervention team. The principal works with the teachers to find intervention for the students. I have very little to do with RTI. Only when they approach me for ideas of intervention, do I help.	1	1	3	2	1
219	RTI is in the formative stage.	0	0	0	0	0
220	Intervention teams meet with individual students, tracking interventions and successes, inclusion of sped. resources, parental envolment	1	1	0	1	1
221	We currently use an IR&S model as the initial intervention with a student.	0	0	0	0	0
222	Dalton Elementary School has been recognized by the State Department for their RTI process.	2	1	1	2	2
223	RTI is a means to provide intervention for struggling learners. It is a team approach to problem solving.	0	0	0	0	0
224	We call it a KidTalk meetings, It is a very structured process involving the entire team in which we identify student's academic, social or behavior struggles and plan interventions accordingly	4	4	2	3	3
225	We are progressing towards full implementation. Some pieces are in place, others aren't.	3	3	2	3	2

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
226	Administration has been attending workshops regarding RTI. Special Education Staffing hasn't attended any workshops, so I am not real familiar with it. I know a little but not enough.	2	2	3	2	1
227	RTI seems to have good intentions, but often is putting me in a difficult position to find more time to create or administer materials to gather data which is then used to see how a student fares against what is considered normal.	1	1	4	1	1
228	We are using RTI.	0	0	1	0	1
229	have tiered intervention levels, team to make sure students are receiving appropriate services	3	3	1	4	3
230	We are in the beginning stages. Intervention groups arestarting in reading, and AimsWeb is being piloted in some classes. as far as using it to diagnose LD, we are staying with the discrepancy model at this time.	2	2	3	2	2
231	We are currently using RTI in our elementary.	0	0	1	0	1
232	Used at the elementary and middle school levels	2	3	1	3	3
233	We are working on alignment of support programs like spec ed, Title, LAP, and ELL with basic ed as our starting point. We are not using the language of RTI but through professional learning communities processes teams are using classroom data to identify students and provide appropriate intervention.	2	2	2	3	3
234	Team that assist students so they can receive the best instruction to meet their specific learning needs.	4	3	1	4	4
235	We do progress monitoring with our students and offer help to those that are struggling. There are various levels of help. We begin with classroom strategies and may go to Title services or special educ services.All this being monitored with teacher collaboration and parent involvement.	4	4	1	4	4
236	We are using it in conjunction with Intervention Time scheduled each day as well as working on PLC as a faculty and school	4	4	1	4	4
237	have highly qualified teachers, we progress monitor individual students learning, provide different tiers of interventions to meet student needs.	3	3	1	3	3
238	I am on the district wide RTI team. We stared it in Elementary three years ago and are now implementing it in secondary as well.	4	4	1	4	4
239	We follow Instructional Decision Making	2	2	1	2	2
240	Pilot Programs being developed at specific levels. Implementation being conducted for review and response to areas of difficulty.	2	0	3	2	2
241	Grades 3-6 have an intervention block that is new this year.	2	2	2	2	3
242	Essential component of our special ed pre-referral system as well as a reg ed intervention stand-alone	3	3	1	4	4

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
243	RTI is implemented in the elementary and middle schools through reading and math coaches who utilize My Reading Coach as a Tier 3 intervention.	2	2	2	3	3
244	It is used more at the elementary level. I am not aware of its use and the middle or high school.	2	2	3	2	2
245	RTI has been implemented	0	0	0	0	0
246	This is being implemented at the elementary level and has not been fully implemented at the high school level.	3	3	2	3	3
247	We use data to determine distribution of our limited RTI resources in math, language arts	2	2	3	2	2
248	General education initiative to address the needs of struggling students and support/provide instructional strategies to do so.	3	3	1	3	3
249	We currently have not been trained as a whole district team for the implementation of RTI. We are a very small school and struggling to stay open for our small enrollment. We are getting some training for our principal and a staff member or two through our local CESA 10 in WI. Most ways to measure and monitor progress are quite costly computer programs that our district cannot fund at this time.	1	1	4	1	1
250	General education teachers have to do almost a year's worth of intervention before being considered for special education services	2	2	3	2	2
251	K-5 program being expanded to middle and high schools. Model after state program.	4	4	1	4	4
252	Students are evaluated. At risk students are identified. A program of remediation is planned and implemented by the classroom teachers. Student progress is evaluated by a team monthly.	3	4	1	3	4
253	we are at the beginning level. We have an RTI committee to begin implementing.	3	3	2	3	3
254	It is getting into full swing more this year. We are using Aimsweb probes to track students in spelling, reading, and math. Teachers are gaining a better understanding of The RTI process and what is considered and intervention.	3	3	3	3	3
255	RTI in my district is a spectrum of services and interventions based on a prescribed step-by-step process (the RTI pyramid). Each level has different interventions depending on the students needs. The RTI team for our school meets weekly to help teachers who have struggling learners with interventions and resources.	4	4	1	4	4
256	Just getting its footing districtwide	2	2	3	2	2
257	We don't use it yet	1	2	2	1	0
258	Run through our Student Assistance Program	2	2	3	2	2
259	Introduced. Guidance Provided. Tier I-II-III services provided to students. Team Meetings scheduled.	3	3	2	3	3

	Response to “Tell us about RTI in your school or district”	RA	CO	CX	T	O
260	We have interventionist for reading and math, but not for science.	2	2	2	3	3
261	Being implemented k-12 plus with non public schools this year.	0	2	0	4	3
262	Just beginning to use.	0	3	3	3	0
263	Students that are below grade level based on standardized tests given throughout the school year. Ex. Study Island, Dibles, KCCT	0	3	0	0	0
264	first year, beginning stages of implementation	0	0	0	0	0
265	We struggle to work RtI into the high school since we see so many students each day.	1	1	3	0	0
266	Our school was very active with RTI, we had teachers looking closely at possible warning indicators that students may need additonal support in specific subjects, we actively worked with students to help strengthen their academics, we supplied time, different methods of teaching and differentiation of materials to help support RTI. However with the changes that DPI has implemented this proactive approach is nearly all but destroyed. We no longer can test as we were, we can't work with other students in a classroom unless they are labeled with something to put them in special education, we no longer can offer suggestions even to teachers asking for some advise about a student.	4	4	0	0	4
267	RTI is in place for students K-2 in the area of reading with three tiers in place and students are assessed and placed in tiers with continual assessment and appropriate intervention throughout.	3	3	0	0	4
268	We do universal screening on all students K-8 in both reading and math. (3 times per year) Students who are identified as "in need of intensive" services are given additional time in their area of need. (If a student is intensive in reading they receive 20 minutes of reading in addition to their already scheduled LA time) Progress monitoring is done on these students 2 times per month. CORE teams meet every other month to look at progress monitoring scores for students. Building level meetings are also held to monitor student progress. If a student does not make progress they are referred on for further interventions through our Instructional Support Team process. This team provides additional support to the student and also monitors progress. Interventions will typically last for up to 30 days. At that point a student can be referred for an educational evaluation. We do not currently identify students for special education through an RTI model. Currently in PA, there are only a few targeted schools that are able to do so.	0	0	4	0	4
269	We have our own plan developed by our Sp Ed Director and is operational	0	0	0	0	3
270	Students are placed in classes according to performance on diagnostic assessments	0	0	0	0	3
271	Our district has undergone initial introductory training only.	2	2	0	3	2

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
272	meet on a monthly basis to review progress of students we have put into RTI using data to support the recommendation. interventions are being administed	0	0	0	0	4
273	process used to implement intervention and data driven. specific to tiers	0	0	0	0	2
274	Some schools are have completely incorporated RTI into their school wide programs, others are still working to get to that point.	2	2	3	0	2
275	We have a specific intervention time set daily at each grade level. Currently we use Aims Web as a benchmark assessment with our students. Interventions are based on indicators from Aims and from grade level common formative assessments.	0	2	0	0	4
276	We use it to ensure that students struggling in classes have their needs met through various channels of support.	2	2	0	0	4
277	Being built	0	0	3	0	1
278	It is in place although I am not directly involved with it in my position.	0	0	0	0	3
279	We have the 3 teir model and use the I Station program.	0	0	0	0	4
280	It is not used systematically, but we try case by case with teir 2 and 3.	1	1	3	0	2
281	In second year of implementation at K-6 level	0	0	0	0	4
282	We are working on level one w/ high school students. We have flagged students due to their results on reading tests and attendance along with behavior	0	0	0	4	4
283	We currently have RtI in place for eligibility, for Reading strategies using Read 180 and RIGOR. We don't have a research-based intervention for math because one doesn't exist at the secondary level.	0	0	0	0	2
284	At the elementary level, we have both a Tier II and III program in place for reading and our developing a mathematics program beginning with a solidified Tier I. At the middle level, we have intervention services in place for both mathematics and reading. Our high school has a Tier II program in place for mathematics.	0	0	0	4	4
285	We us RtI as an instructional strategy to facilitate learning for students who are struggling in school. Most interventions are done in the classroom, with some pull-out services for reading. We use the expertise of our staff (regular education, specialists, and special education) to determine appropriate interventions to meet the individual needs of our students. If a student does not respond to interventions in the classroom, then there is consideration for possible testing/placement in special education or gifted and talented placement.	0	0			4

	Response to “Tell us about RTI in your school or district”	RA	CO	CX	T	O
286	We have a framework based on the RTI model. Interventions are being carried out in K-6.	0	0	0	4	3
287	In high school, haven't seen it at work yet. We have a new student that RTI needs to be used and instead of the Regular Teacher being involved, of course, they want EC personnel to do the work the Regular Teacher is suppose to do.	1	1	3	0	3
288	n/a	0	0	0	0	0
289	have established a district wide, school based student assistance team which incorporates the phases of resonse to intervention; structured referral and response system to students in need of academic/behavioral help, support to teachers, coordinate remediation efforts for low statewide test performance	0	0	0	0	4
290	COLLABORATION OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, AND ADMINISTRATION TO HELP STUDENTS THAT ARE POTENTIAL FALLING THROUGH THE EDUCATIONAL GAPS PROVIDED BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.	0	3	0	0	3
291	We have steps in place to address students at different ability levels and to ensure that they make progress.					
292	It exists here. It is improving student achievement.	3	3	0	0	2
293	We are currently utilizing RtI in our district	0	0	0	0	3
294	We follow a system called IDM or Instructional Decision Making. We collect data and keep track of every student's reading and math scores. Based on these scores, teacher observation and/or intervention data, we make an instructional decision. We follow a tier system but do not call it such.	1	1	0	0	2
295	literacy first	0	0	0	0	1
296	Response to Intervention applies to any student identified with learning needs: academic, behavioral and attendance. Our school is applying RTI in placing an middle school student in special education, but more often to determine additional interventions to apply for struggling students.	0	0	0	2	2
297	RTI is strong in our district and school.	4	4	0	0	4
298	we are working to better use formative assessment this year as part of the Iowa Core Curriculum's characteristics of effective instruction; We also have intervention support systems in place for our students	0	3	0	2	0
299	RTI is done by a committe and the general ed and special education teachers combined. Since my students are already in special education, I have very little do to with RTI.	0	0	0	0	0
300	We don't use it to my knowledge	0	0	0	0	0
301	We have an RTI process on our campus through a house concept.	0	0	0	0	0

	Response to “Tell us about RTI in your school or district”	RA	CO	CX	T	O
302	We became a Schoolwide Title I school to help provide flexible use of resources for student support/ interventions. We are working on developing skill sets with formative assessing and collaboratively determining "just in time" interventions for students. We have modified our aide schedules to provide greater flexiblity for them to support teachers working with students on specific skills with frequent regrouping.	0	3	0	2	3
303	We have a mandatory 45 day report on all students that outlines any difficulties a child may be having and how we need to respond with services.	0	0	0	0	3
304	At this time I don't believe we are using RTI but a form similar to it.	0	0	0	0	0
305	Very limited implementation	0	0	0	4	0
306	We use the DIBELS testing program in conjunction with RTI and refer students to SAT team	0	3	0	0	3
307	Used in elementary buildings	0	0	0	3	0
308	We have had a full time RtII Program in my building for 2 years. It is very effective.	0	4	1	0	4
309	I've attended a webinar about RTI. We've recently started to implement a series of intervention efforts to target specific areas of need such as reading deficiencies.	0	0	0	3	0
310	There currently is no real RTI program. New superintendent is addressing the issue.	0	0	0	0	0
311	Tell you what? We have a process in place that implements the requirements of meeting the needs of all students	0	0	0	0	0
312	Services are provided to students in Tier 2-4	0	0	0	0	0
313	Implemented three years ago and is still a work in progress. Not popular with classroom teachers.	1	1	0	0	1
314	We have looked at it and use elements of it at the elementary level	0	0	0	3	0
315	we use RTI in the IAT process prior to referral	0	0	0	0	0
316	We are not using it yet but are looking into training and beginning within the next year.	0	0	0	0	0
317	We have implemented an RtI2 model adding Instruction to the title.We use an Universal Access time to implement many of the interventions.	0	3	0	3	2
318	We use RTI to track students and provide interventions, we do not use it to qualify students for special services.	1	2	0	3	2
319	In the third year of using RtI and it is going well in reading and mathematics.	3	0	0	0	4

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
320	Teachers think it is something new, when it is really just good teaching. Teachers are looking for ways to get special ed kids through the system and placed in SPED without trying new approaches!	1	1	2	0	1
321	Multiple training sessions, execution in the classroom.	0	1	4	1	0
322	We have implemented an enhancement period to better serve students who have not performed well on state-mandated tests.	0	0	0	0	3
323	Discussed but no real protocol for tiered service.	0	0	0	0	0
324	Not aware of RTI in our school	0	0	0	0	0
325	We are in the beginning phases and currently do regular progress monitoring on students as needed.	0	0	0	3	2
326	We have a 3 tier model at our campus/district. Tier 1 is all general education programs that are available to all students; tier 2 consists of small group and/or individual academic and behavioral interventions that are available for struggling learners; tier 3 consists of highly intensive, daily, and individual interventions for those students who do not respond significantly to tier 2 model.	0	0	0	0	4
327	It is indeed a work in progress. Our differing specialties Speech, Language, Hearing, SLD, EBD are individually working out plans without our involvement.	0	1	0	3	1
328	We do not specifically use RTI in our district, I was introduced to it in College.	0	0	0	0	0
329	still evolving--most functional at the elementary level; some supports in place at middle level; few supports in place at hs level	1	1	0	2	2
330	very data driven, required on our IEPs	0	0	0	0	0
331	We currently have three levels of RTi programs running in our school- in class, after class, and collaborative instruction	0	0	0	0	3
332	RTI is currently implemented in all of our schools at various levels.	0	4	0	0	3
333	We are in year 2 of district wide implementation.	0	4	0	0	3
334	We implement a 3-Tier RTI model in all of our schools within the District.	0	4	0	0	4
335	through the Intervention and Referral services committee	0	1	0	0	1
336	Response to Intervention is an ongoing process in our district. We have different Tiers for students. We meet as departments monthly to discuss struggling students who may need some interventions. We then meet as a RTI committee to discuss the students and what can be done to help them. We have tutoring available, help from teachers, differentiated instruction, and a RTI study hall to give students some additional instruction in reading, writing, and math. It is a very successful program that we are using.	3	3	0	4	3

	Response to “Tell us about RTI in your school or district”	RA	CO	CX	T	O
337	Has been in place for a couple of years	3	3	0	0	2
338	None active at this time	1	0	0	0	0
339	Response to Intervertion is planned and carried out by our staff during a special tutorial time. It in involves regular assessments and planned instruction. It is daily for those identified through assessment.	3	4	0	0	0
340	We use RTI at the elementary level to provide extra support for struggling students.	2	2	0	3	2
341	Not used	1	0	0	0	0
342	We have a SRTI team that meets bi-monthly and also the team holds PD for staff. Constant contact with students, parents, and teachers	3	2	0	0	3
343	we are currently developing and implementing our plan	2	2	0	3	0
344	RTI is used and we have a board policy to require its implementation	1	1	0	0	0
345	RTI is used in our school as a method of student intervention. RTI is a systematic approach to intervention.	3	3	0	0	0
346	It is used in our Special Ed department.	2	1	0	2	1
347	Our system uses a three teir system.	3	3	0	0	0
348	Each building has an active team ideally with representation from each grade level or department. We have developed a district standard set of documents that are accessable through our student recrods network. Gen ed teachers select students who are not experiencing success in their classroom and initiate the process. The teacher is then supported through the process by members of the RTI team. Most of the buildings call this team the SST or Student Success Team. There is a widely varying level of understanding among teachers with respect to RTI, its purpose and how it functions. Overall however, it has been a critical part of helping teachers narrow thier focus on meeting individual needs of every student.	4	4	3	0	0
349	Students that are currently below grade level receive supplemental instruction and have the opportunity to participate in several programs including H.A.N.D.S, Vision Therapy, Guided Reading, and 21st Century. Students and parents also have the opportunity to meet as needed with teachers and other school personnel.	0	0	0	0	0
350	We are beginning this year.	2	2	0	3	0
351	We have an Early Reading Intervention (ERI) program in all elementary schools throughout the district. It's not the "ideal" RTI that offers a variety of interventions due to limited funds. However, we do attempt several interventions at Tiers 1 and 2 and then usually proceed with a Special Education referral at Tier 3.	2	2	3	2	2

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
352	We are in the beginning stages of implementation.	2	0	0	3	0
353	We started a SMILE (support and motivation in a learning environment) where all the professionals in our school get together to discuss resources and interventions for a student. The classroom teacher gathers documentation of efforts made with the use of these interventions and resources.	0	0	0	0	0
354	They are three letters that the county office folks use, and we've seen the book in someones hand once or twice.	1	0	3	0	0
355	We have implemented it since 2008. Hard but effective	3	3	3	0	0
356	Not currently using RTI	1	0	0	0	0
357	We have a 3-tier system established. We have a core RTI team. This is our 4th year of full-implementation and it is a constant changing system created to help all children succeed.	3	3	2	0	0
358	We are providing RTI for reading for the third year and starting an RTI math program this year. All students receive general instruction and then are divided into skills based groups. Students enrolled in RTI also receive additional interventions.	2	2	0	4	0
359	work with reading consultants using district-wide/grade level assessments to identify students in need of support at the three tiers - assist classroom teachers with strategies/materials/programs to use at Tier 1. Provide Tier 2 support along with reading department. Tier 3 implemented by reading department - referral to special education if Tier 3 interventions show little progress - revisit students at each tier every 8 - 12 weeks	2	2	0	2	0
360	Our regular education teachers surround all students with interventions for struggling learners. They come together as student consultation teams to discuss educational strategies that need to be implemented. They work together with our Special Services team to identify students that need specific interventions and follow through with appropriate testing and identification processes.	0	0	0	0	0
361	Being implemented	2	2	0	0	0
362	We do not use it directly. If school were doing their job the way they should be, we would not need the law. The law was written more for the large districts and is more of a burden on small effective districts. Laws should only be written for specific cases and be fully funded.	1	1	0	0	0
363	We implemented RtI 3 years ago. However, is not implemented effectively.	2	2	3	1	0
364	Just starting to look at strategies here.	1	0	0	1	0
365	RTI plays a larger role at the elementary and middle school level. It is rare that we have any initial referrals at the high school level.	2	2	0	2	2

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
366	RTI is a reading intervention program intended to identify and help struggling readers.	0	1	0	0	0
367	Tier 1 and 1 a are building level non sped supports brainstormed through classroom teachers, Tier 2 are interventions where sped is present to suggest, Tier 3 is sped involvement.	3	2	0	0	0
368	The Intervention and Referral Services Committee meets and forms RTI.	2	2	0	0	0
369	We are in the beginning stages of RTI as we identify universal screeners and progress monitoring tools as well as interventions in Tiers II and III. This past summer we created a district-wide manual to insure continuity across the district.	3	3	0	0	3
370	work in progress	1	0	0	1	0
371	Implemented this year at all elementary buildings	2	0	0	3	0
372	We have a pyramid of interventions (which need revising), a Child Study Team to which students in need are referred by teachers. This team puts in place interventions beyond the classroom and also supports the classroom teacher in management of the struggling learner.	4	3	2	2	2
373	It is not being used in the buildings. Very little progress monitoring takes place with differentiated interventions being used.	0	1	0	0	1
374	We have an RTI process for struggling students. They must go through the RTI process and try different interventions before they can be referred to 504 or Special Ed. Teachers are required to fill out an RTI package that documents the students data and intervention that have been tried, how long they have had these intervention and what is the progress of the student after these intervention have been put into place. We do this for educational needs and behavior needs.	3	3	2	2	3
375	RTI is being conducted by general education teachers according to the students grade and skill level.	0	1	0	3	3
376	We implement RTI in all grade levels.	0	3	2	2	4
377	Three tiered initiatives are in place prek through grade 8.	0	3	2	2	4
378	Non exsistent; we have a Student Assistance Team (SAT)	0	1	0	1	2
379	It is in the early stages. District and some school personnel have been trained, but it has not been fully adopted.	0	2	0	4	3
380	RTI is used by all teachers. Training has occured and is occuring. The principal monitors its use.	0	2	2	3	3
381	We have had the Reading first grant in our schools for the past 5 years- we have RTi fully in place for Elementary school.	0	3	1	2	4
382	We are in our 2nd year of RTI and have been training staff and supporting its implementation.	0	3	2	3	3

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
383	I am vaguely aware of it.	1	1	0	0	1
384	none	0	0	0	0	0
385	Teachers provide and document interventions at level 1 and 2 of RTI. Level 3 brings together a team to create specific plans tailored to meet the educational needs of the specific student.	0	3	2	2	4
386	We do pre and post writing/reading prompts at the beginning and end of the year in all english classes. Teachers have access to several on-line programs to help individual readers improve comprehension	3	3	1	2	4
387	It is in place online to identify students in need of accomodations and modifications.	0	0	0	1	1
388	Ignored; not dealt with; a meaningless buzzword.	1	1	0	1	1
389	It is in the beginning stages with the current focus on the Elementary. We are monitoring policy at the state level prior to a full committment.	0	2	3	3	3
390	WE are in our third year of implementing RTI district wide	0	3	2	3	3
391	We have a team well established in our school that has been using RTI for several years.	0	3	0	0	4
392	RTI is fairly new to our district (approximately 3 years) it has been adopted as a means of implmenting tier level reading instruction at the elementary school. Components of the RTI process are currently being used during the refereal to special education process at all grade levels.	0	3	2	0	4
393	RTI is primarily being used in our elementary grades. Currently, we are using an intensive reading program. We are able to monitor student performance closely, and students who are not performing where they should be are receiving additional interventions. We doccument those interventions used and see how the student does after their completion. We are also using RTI as a determining factor on whether or not to begin testing a student for special education services.	3	3	2	2	4
394	We have begun implementation of RtI across all grade levels this school year, in compliance with federal law	0	2	0	2	2
395	Provide RtI services to students in the area of Reading, Math and Behavior	3	2	0	2	0
396	We use research based interventions, common assessments and progress monitoring	0	0	0	3	3
397	It is up and running at the elementary schools, but is yet to be implemented at the high school level. There has been talk of RTI and the ramifications for the high school, but a full-on program has yet to be developed and implemented.	3	3	3	4	4

	Response to "Tell us about RTI in your school or district"	RA	CO	CX	T	O
398	We have been using RTI (in Kansas it is called MTSS) for 4 years now with awesome success!	4	4	0	0	4
399	Our school is using RTI as one method of determining learning disabilities in students. We have a strong intervention model that is used prior to special education evaluation.	4	3	0	3	3
400	We have actually implemented a four tier system. Our core program is working toward the 85% benchmark. Our strategic and intensive intervention programs have seen success. We implemented a fourth tier for the most severe and profound students in need of assistance.	4	4	2	3	4
401	We use a lot of formal assessments to determine what needs to be done in the classroom. If there needs to be modifications made, we will know why and specifically what needs to be changed.	3	3	1	3	3
402	Handled through our special education dept	0	1	4	3	3
403	it is the process that we use to evaluate and intervene with students who are underachieving	0	3	2	3	3
404	Not currently implemented	0	0	0	0	0
405	level 2 keys to literacy program, level3, wilson intensive or other multi-sensory instruction	0	3	3	3	2
406	We are just beginning to emphasize RTI in the high school. We identify students who are below grade level in reading and math skills and pull them out for remediation twice a week.	2	3	3	4	3
407	Used to customize the level of support students need to be successful	4	3	0	3	3
408	Is currently being monitored by a Student Resource Coordinator	0	1	3	3	2
	Total	337	465	263	453	645
	Average	0.83	1.15	0.65	1.12	1.59

Note. RA = relative advantage; CO = compatibility; CX = complexity; T = trialability, O = observability; RTI = response to intervention. Scores on a scale of 0 = *not applicable*, 1 = *low*, 2 = *medium low*, 3 = *medium high,* and 4 = *high*.

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